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THE ACTUMN OF LIFE.

BY D. R. W.

The old man sits at his cottage door,
  In the gleam of the dying day;
His heart is calm as the silent shore,
  When the winds have passed away;
His thoughts as still as the fragrant breeze
  That whisper of peace to the azure seas.

For Memory comes with a gentle hand,
  And bears on Fancy's wings
His thoughts to her own immortal land,
  Where the past for ever sings
Of joys that brightened the fair days fled,
  Ere friendships faded with friends long dead.

And the Past, though sad, for love that is gone,
  Is sweet to the old man's mind;
Like the birds that sang in those years, have flown
  The hopes he hath left behind;
Yet Memory brings from each bygone day
  Some gift of peace for his lonely way!

And so the present is made more bright
  By the lessons that past hath taught;
As the East reflects the wondrous light
  Of the West, by sunset brought;
And though his vision is growing dim,
  God maketh his pathway bright for him.

His age is peace; yet he joys to think,
  That a deeper than earth can know
Shall be his, when his tranquil soul shall drink
  Of a calmer twilight glow,
In that happier Home, where his thoughts at last
  Shall yearn no more for the distant Past!

AT SEA

With An Infernal Machine.

By J. F. BARDSLEY.

CHAPTER II.

I TRIED to recall the words which had been spoken in that terrible dialogue I had overheard. Would they admit to any construction but the one which stared me in the face?

My reason forced me to confess that they would not. I endeavored to array the various facts which formed the chain of circumstantial evidence, and to find a flaw in it; but no, not a link was missing. There was the strange way in which our passengers had come abroad, enabling them to evade any examination of their luggage. The very name of "Flannigan" smacked of Fenianism, while "Muller" suggested nothing but Socialism and murder. Then their mysterious manner; their remark that their plans would have been ruined had they missed the ship; their fear of being observed; last, but not least, the clenching in the production of the little square box with the trigger, and their grim joke about the face of the man who should let it off by mistake,—could these facts lead to any conclusion other than that they were the desperate emissaries of some body, political or otherwise, and intended to sacrifice themselves, their fellow-passengers, and the ship, in one great holocaust? The whitish granules which I had seen one of them pour into the box formed no doubt a fuse or train for exploding it. I had myself heard a sound come from it which might have emanated from some delicate piece of machinery. But what did they mean by their allusion to to-night? Could it be that they contemplated putting their horrible design into execution on the very first evening of our voyage? The mere thought of it sent a cold shudder over me, and made me for a moment superior even to the agonies of sea-sickness.

I have remarked that I am a physical coward. I am a moral one also. It is seldom that the two defects are united to such a degree in the one character. I have known many men who were most sensitive to bodily danger, and yet were distinguished for the independence and strength of their minds. In my own case, however, I regret to say that my quiet and retiring habits had fostered a nervous dread of doing anything remarkable or making myself conspicuous, which exceeded, if possible, my fear of personal peril. An ordinary mortal placed under the circumstances in which I now found myself would have gone at once to the captain, confessed his fears, and put the matter into his hands. To me, however, constituted as I am, the idea was most repugnant. The thought of becoming the observed of all observers, cross-questioned by a stranger, and confronted with two desperate conspiritors in the character of a denouncer, was hateful to me. Might it not by some remote possibility prove that I was mistaken? What would be my feelings if there should turn out to be no grounds for my accusation? No, I would procrastinate; I would keep my eye on the two desperadoes and dog them at every turn. Anything was better than the possibility of being wrong.

Then it struck me that even at that moment some new phase of the conspiracy might be developing itself. The nervous excitement seemed to have driven away my incipient attack of sickness, for I was able to stand up and lower myself from the boat without experiencing any return of it. I staggered along the deck with the intention of descending into the cabin and finding how my acquaintances of the morning were occupying themselves. Just as I had my hand on the companion-rail, I was astonished by receiving a hearty slap on the back, which nearly shot me down the steps with more haste than dignity.

"Is that you, Hammond?" said a voice which I seemed to recognise.

"God bless me," I said as I turned round, "it can't be Dick Morton! Why, how are you, old man?"

This was an unexpected piece of luck in the midst of my perplexities. Dick was just the man I wanted; kindly and shrewd in his nature, and prompt in his actions, I should have no difficulty in telling him my suspicions, and could rely upon his sound sense to point out the best course to pursue. Since I was a little lad in the second form at Harrow, Dick had been my adviser and protector. He saw at a glance that something had gone wrong with me.

"Hullo!" he said, in his kindly way, "what's put you about, Hammond? You look as white as a sheet. Sea-sickness, eh?"

"No, not that altogether," said I. "Walk up and down with me, Dick; I want to speak to you. Give me your arm.

Supporting myself on Dick's stalwart frame, I tottered along by his side; but it was some time before I could muster resolution to speak.

"Have a cigar," said he, breaking the silence.

"No thanks," said I. "Dick, we shall be all corpses to-night."

"That's no reason against your having a cigar now," said Dick in his cool way, but looking hard at me from under his shaggy eye-brows as he spoke. He evidently thought that my intellect was a little gone.

"No," I continued, "it's no laughing matter; and I speak in sober earnest, I assure you. I have discovered an infamous conspiracy, Dick, to destroy this ship and every soul that is in her;" and I then proceeded systematically, and in order to lay before him the chain of evidence which I had collected. "There, Dick," I said, as I concluded, "what do you think of that? and above all, what am I to do?"

To my astonishment he burst into a hearty fit of laughter.

"I'd be frightened," he said, "if any fellow but you had told me as much. You always had a way, Hammond, of discovering mares' nests. I like to see the old traits breaking out again. Do you remember at school how you swore there was a ghost in the long room, and how it turned out to be your own reflection in the mirror? Why, man," he continued, "what object would any one have in destroying this ship? We have no great political guns abroad.

"On the contrary, the majority of the passengers are Americans. Besides, in this sober nineteenth century, the most wholesale murderers stop at including themselves among the victims. Depend upon it, you have misunderstood them, and have mistaken a photographic camera, or something equally innocent, for an infernal machine."

"Nothing of the sort, sir," said I rather touchily. "You will learn to your cost, I fear, that I have neither exaggerated nor misinterpreted a word.

"As to the box, I have certainly never before seen one like it. It contained delicate machinery; of that I am convinced, from the way in which the men handled it and spoke of it."

"You'd make out every packet of perishable goods to be a torpedo," said Dick, "if that is to be your only test."

"The man's name was Flannigan," I continued.

"I don't think that would go very far in a court of law," said Dick; "but come, I have finished my cigar. Suppose we go down together and split a bottle of claret. You can point out these two Orsinis to me if they are still in the cabin."

"All right," I answered; "I am determined not to lose sight of them all day.

"Don't look hard at them, though; for I don't want them to think that they are being watched."

"Trust me," said Dick; "I'll look as unconscious and guileless as a lamb;" and with that we passed down the companion and into the saloon.

A good many passengers were scattered about the great central table, some wrestling with refractory carpet-bags and rug-straps, some having their luncheon, and a few reading and otherwise amusing themselves. The objects of our quest were not there. We passed down the room and peered into every berth; but there was no sign of them.

"Heavens!" thought I, "perhaps at this very moment they are beneath our feet, in the hold or engine-room, preparing their diabolical contrivance!" It was better to know the worst than to remain in such suspence.

"Steward," said Dick, "are there any other gentlemen about?"

"There's two in the smoking-room, sir," answered the steward.

The smoking-room was a little snuggery, luxuriously fitted up, and adjoining the pantry. We pushed the door open and entered. A sigh of relief escaped from my bosom. The very first object on which my eyes rested was the cadaverous face of Flannigan, with its hard-set mouth and unwinking eye.

His companion sat opposite to him. They were both drinking, and a pile of cards lay on the table. They were engaged in playing as we entered.

I nudged Dick to show him that we had found our quarry, and we sat down beside them with as unconcerned an air as possible. The two conspirators seemed to take little notice of our presence. I watched them both narrowly.

The game at which they were playing was "Napoleon." Both were adepts at it; and I could not help admiring the consummate nerve of men who, with such a secret at their hearts, could devote their minds to the manipulating of a long suit or the finessing of a queen. Money changed hands rapidly; but the run of luck seemed to be all against the taller of the two players.

At last he threw down his cards on the table with an oath, and refused to go on.

"No, I'm hanged if I do!" he said; "I haven't had more than two of the suits for five hands."

"Never mind," said his comrade, as he gathered up his winnings; "a few dollars one way or the other won't go very far after to-night's work."

I was astonished at the rascal's audacity, but took care to keep my eyes fixed abstractedly upon the ceiling, and drank my wine in as unconscious a manner as possible. I felt that Flannigan was looking towards me with his wolfish eyes to see if I had noticed the allusion. He whispered something to his companion which I failed to catch. It was a caution, I suppose, for the other answered rather angrily.

"Nonsense! Why shouldn't I say what I like? Over-caution is just what would ruin us."

"I believe you want it not to come off," said Flannigan.

"You believe nothing of the sort," said the other speaking rapidly and loudly. "You know as well as I do that when I play for a stake I like to win it. But I won't have my words criticised and cut short by you or any other man; I have as much interest in our success as you have—more, I hope."

He was quite hot about it, and puffed furiously at his cigar for a few minutes. The eyes of the other ruffian wandered alternatively from Dick Morton to myself. I knew that I was in the presence of a desperate man, that a quiver of my lip might be the signal for him to plunge a weapon into my heart; but I betrayed more self-command than I should have given myself credit for under such trying circumstances. As to Dick, he was as immovable and apparently as unconscious as the Egyptian Sphinx.

There was silence for some time in the smoking-room, broken only by the crisp rattle of the cards, as the man Muller shuffled them up before replacing them in his pocket. He still seemed to be somewhat flushed and irritable. Throwing the end of his cigar into the spittoon, he glanced defiantly at his companion, and turned towards me.

"Can you tell me, sir," he said, "when this ship will be heard of again?"

They were both looking at me, but though my face may have turned a trifle paler, my voice was as steady as ever as I answered.

"I presume, sir, that it will be heard of first when it enters Queenstown Harbor."

"Ha, ha!" laughed the angry little man, "I knew you would say that. Don't you kick me under the table, Flannigan, I won't stand it. I know what I am doing. You are wrong, sir," he continued, turning to me, "utterly wrong."

"Some passing ship, perhaps," suggested "Dick."

"No, nor that either."

"The weather is fine," I said; "why should we not be heard of at our destination?"

"I didn't say we shouldn't be heard of at our destination. No doubt we shall in the course of time, but that is not where we shall be heard of first."

"Where then?" asked Dick.

"That you will never know. Suffice it that a rapid and mysterious agency will signal our whereabouts, and that before the day is out. Ha, ha!" and he chuckled once again.

"Come on deck!" growled his comrade; "you have drunk too much of that confounded brandy-and-water. It has loosened your tongue. Come away!" and taking him by the arm he half led him, half forced him out of the smoking-room, and we heard them stumbling up the companion together, and on to the deck.

"Well, what do you think now?" I gasped, as I turned towards Dick. He was as imperturbable as ever.

"Think!" he said, "Why, I think what his companion thinks, that we have been listening to the ravings of a half-drunken man. The fellow smelt of brandy."

"Nonsense, Dick! you saw how the other tried to stop his tongue."

"Of course he did. He didn't want his friend to make a fool of himself before strangers. Maybe the short one is a lunatic, and the other his private keeper. It's quite possible."

"O, Dick, Dick," I cried, "how can you be so blind! Don't you see that every word confirmed our previous suspicion?"

"Humbug, man!" said Dick; "you're working yourself into a state of nervous excitement. Why, what the deuce do you make of all that nonsense about a mysterious agent which would signal our whereabouts?"

"I'll tell you what he meant, Dick," I said, bending forward and grasping my friend's arm. "He meant a sudden glare and a flash seen far out at sea by some lonely fisherman off the American coast. That's what he meant."

"I didn't think you were such a fool, Hammond." Said Dick Merton testily.

"If you try to fix a literal meaning on the twaddle that every drunken man talks, you will come to some queer conclusions.

"Let us follow their example, and go on deck. You need fresh air, I think. Depend upon it, your liver is out of order. A sea-voyage will do you a world of good."

"If ever I see the end of this one," I groaned, "I'll promise never to venture on another. They are laying the cloth, so it's hardly worth while my going up. I'll stay below and finish my smoke."

"I hope dinner will find you in a more pleasant state of mind," said Dick; and he went out, leaving me to my thoughts until the clang of the great gong summoned us to the saloon.

My appetite, I need hardly say, had not been improved by the incidents which had occured during the day.

I sat down, however, mechanically at the table, and listened to the talk which was going on around me. There were nearly a hundred first-class passengers, and as the wine began to circulate their voices combined with the clash of the dishes to form a perfect Babel. I found myself seated between a very stout and nervous old lady and a prim little clergyman; and as neither made any advances I retired into my shell, and spent my time in observing the appearance of my fellow voyagers. I could see Dick in the dim distance dividing his attentions between a jointless fowl in front of him and a self-possessed young lady at his side.

Captain Dowie was doing the honors at my end, while the surgeon of the vessel was seated at the other. I was glad to notice that Flannigan was placed almost opposite to me. As long as I had him before my eyes I knew that, for the time at least, we were safe.

He was sitting with what was meant to be a sociable smile on his grim face. It did not escape me that he drank largely of wine—so largely that even before the dessert appeared his voice had become decidedly husky. His friend Muller was seated a few places lower down. He ate little, and appeared to be nervous and restless.

"Now, ladies,' said our genial captain, "I trust that you will consider yourselves at home aboard my vessel. I have no fears for the gentlemen.

"A bottle of champagne, steward. Here's to a fresh breeze and a quick passage! I trust our friends in America will hear of our safe arrival in twelve days, or a fortnight at the very latest."

I looked up. Quick as was the glance which passed between Flannigan and his confederate, I was able to intercept it. There was an evil smile on the former's thin lips.

The conversation rippled on. Politics, the sea, amusements, religion, each was in turn discussed. I remained a silent though an interested listner. It struck me that no harm could be done by introducing the subject which was ever in my mind. It could be managed in an off-hand way, and would at least have the effect of turning the captain's thoughts in that direction.

I could watch, too, what effect it would have upon the faces of the conspirators.

There was a sudden lull in the conversation. The ordinary subjects of interest appeared to be exhausted. The opportunity was a favorable one.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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SOME GREAT MEN IN PRIVATE.—Godolphin spent all the time he could spare from public business at the cock pit Nero unbent himself by constructing hydraulic clocks, and Charles II. by conducting chemical experiments. Prince Rupert almost lived in his laboratory, and to his recreations we are indebted for the invention of mezzotinto.

It is curious to notice how men who have been noted for their polish and culture as writers or conversationalists have in their leisure moments found a strange pleasure in associating with their inferiors. Prior, one of the most elegant of our minor poets, the companion of princes and diplomatists, constantly passed whole evenings in chatting with a common soldier and his slattern wife in a low public-house in Long Acre. Thomas Wharton, the historian of English poetry, and a singularly refined scholar, was often to be found in sordid taverns joking and being joked. Porson and Elmsley had similar propensities. So also had Turner the painter. Machiavelli and Burke delighted to forget politics by sharing the labors of their farm-servants; and even the stately Bolingbroke, as we learn from one of Pope's most delightful letters, was not above shouldering a prong. Byron's principal amusement during his residence at Venice was shooting with a pistol at a coin in a cleft stick, and that pursuit he practiced more methodically than any other thing in his unmethodical life.

THE SEASON OF LOVE.

Christmas Day! The blessed time of giving,
When mocking winter's thrall
The heart warms to the heat of love's fair summer,
And throbs with joy for all.
The whole wide world is but a field of labor
For sowing kindly seeds—
The human heart a record where affection
May sum up worthy deeds.

The inward weeds, so long and strong in growing,
Wilt in love's balmy airs;
The narrow dreams that stopped at our own thresholds
Give way to nobler cares.
The spirit of the season bursts the bounds
Regard for self would plan,
And opes the heart—as God throws open Heaven—
To universal man.

Perhaps it is a foretaste of that glory
Where Mercy e'er holds sway,
And angel hands blot out the lines of sorrow
In His eternal day.
That endless day of kindness and of loving—
Where God's broad fountain flows,
And on its bosom bears unnumbered pleasures
To bury this earth's woes.

—P. H. DOYLE.

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A SHADOWED LOVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DOCTOR WESTWOOD'S SECRET," "MARJORIE'S TRIALS," "HEARTS AND CORONETS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.—[CONTINUED]

HE stooped and took her hand, stammering with a sudden confusion as he bent over it.

"Good Heaven!" he exclaimed then, shocked to see how the fair white hand was bruised and frayed by the cruel strain it had borne. "Good Heaven! Miss Melville—Christal! I——"

She drew away the wounded palm, covering it quickly and with a little nervous smile.

"It is nothing," she said, with quivering lips.

"Wet swabs," suggested Geordie Armstrong's robust voice, breaking in upon the threatened crisis with matter-of-fact abruptness. "Mother, your handkerchief—Christie, yours. There!"—emptying the water carafe from the sideboard on the soft cambric. "Let me bind them up, Christie, I have experience in that sort of thing—personal experience."

But it was Mervyn who performed that office, putting Geordie aside with a quiet assertion of superior right which brought the faintest dawn of color over Christal's white cheek and caused the languid pulse to flutter beneath his touch.

Then came dinner, when Georgie's spirits rampant at the rebound, jarred upon the other two, upon whom a certain subduing consciousness had fallen, and when Lady Armstrong behaved with admirable discretion, ignoring whatever was unusual in the atmosphere of the occasion and leaving the *Siren* and her adventures scrupulously out of the conversation.

It was only to Geordie, in the security of a *tete-a-tete* on the way back to Wintlesholme, that she said:

"It's the last time I shall ever trust myself on board your yacht. I never had such a fright in my life. And, as for Christie——"

"'Ye gentlewomen of England who sit at home at ease,
Ye little know the dangers of those who tempt the seas,'"

quoted Geordie, still under the elation of a stirring adventure happily concluded. "All's well that end's well. I'm sorry that you were frightened, mother; but, as for Christie"—repeating Lady Armstrong's words—"well, she has had an opportunity of distinguishing herself, and that is a good deal. By George, it was a close shave! I always knew Christie would come out strong if she had the opportunity."

"Ah," responded his mother, shaking her head solemnly, "we haven't seen the end of it yet!"

"The end!" retorted Geordie. "Why, according to the story-books, the end ought to be——"

Then he checked himself suddenly.

That end—the end which developed itself before him as he spoke—was not exactly to his mind after all.

He was not sure that he would like it when it came to the point.

There is a "dog-in-the-mangerish" instinct about most men which prevents their cordially acquiescing in another man's appropriation of a charming woman—under their very eyes too.

What was it which kept Tempest Mervyn awake and restless that evening long after the rest of the party—even stalwart Geordie—had retired, worn out, to their beds?

Tempest remained, leaning over the balcony opening out from the deserted drawing-room, looking down to where a golden glitter from the lighted windows of the hotel struggled with the silver radiance of moonlight on the water.

He was combating a tender memory which rose like a surging wave between him and a newer, nearer interest; he was trying in vain to turn away from a fair young face, Hebe-like in its freshness and loveliness, which would appear all unbidden by the side of a pale figure, with luminous eyes, filling all the foreground of his thoughts.

"Tush!" he cried at last, pitching his half-smoked cigar into a wave as it broke upon the beach below.

"I am a fool. But I must lay this ghost first. I will go to Paris to-morrow. A fool for my pains!" he added bitterly. "The Frenchman was right who said that, in a real passion, there is always one ill-treated. At last"—with a glance at a window above his head, as he turned to go in—"she does not deserve to be that one."

She had rescued his life doubly; she had given him back faith and hope and the courage to lift his head and live; she had been true to him, in the highest and noblest sense of the word, by teaching him to be true to himself. And he was not ungrateful.

This was what he said to himself; and, as he said it, the golden-burning lights vanished and the pale moon shone alone over the heaving waters.

He groped his way through the dim sleeping house up to his own room with a chill sense that warmth and light had gone out of his life for ever.

CHAPTER XIV.

The diligence which carried away Mr. George Brown from Pontresina pursued the uneven tenor of its way, dragging itself toilsomely up rugged passes, zigzagging perilously down steep descents, halting at primitive village posting-houses and coming down from sunshiny mountain-tops to the premature nightfall of the shadowed valleys.

It was not overcrowded, for the current of travel set towards the Engadine, not from it at that season.

The coupe was reserved for a bride and bridegroom returning from Silvaplana; the box, where Mr. George Brown travelled held several passengers; but the inside was for the greater part of the day exclusively occupied by a lady, who was probably an invalid, since she did not descend at any of the halting-places and scarcely partook of any refreshment.

Mr. George Brown, who was in attendance upon her, was attentive and respectful; and it was evident that she was a lady, and not an English maid, journeying in the courier's company, as the coachman thought he had understood—or misunderstood—from the hotel proprietor at Pontresina.

Whether however the lady of the interior was young or old, handsome or plain, remained a mystery to the end of the journey; for she leaned back in the corner of the vehicle, her face covered by a thick gray veil, and did not exert herself to look out of the windows, even at the most magnificent points of view on the route.

Manifestly the lady was an invalid; and Mr. George Brown's was a responsible charge, although, with the reticence of his country, he offered no information on the subject, but dined heartily whilst his lady fasted, and brought back his untouched offerings of refreshment with a perfectly vacant countenance.

"We shall have a dark night," remarked one of his fellow-passengers in German to the Englishman, as he clambered up into his place beside him just as the short twilight faded! "Himmel, it is to be hoped the road beyond there is mended! The mountain torrents had swept it half away the last time I passed."

"It will be all right by this time," coolly rejoined his companion. "It would be a bad look-out for us else."

Still the German was nervous; he peered anxiously into the darkness before him, anathematised the absent moon and the stars, and regretted that he had not chosen the evening diligence, which would have enabled him to pass the critical point by daylight.

"Good gracious!" he exclaimed presently clutching Mr. Brown's arm. "There are lights there! We will descend; we will walk. Coachman, stop——"

"There is a chalet there; the lights are from that," exclaimed the courier. "Sit still, man"—shaking off the other's nervous grasp remorselessly.

But Mr. George Brown was wrong.

There was no chalet; there was simply a disabled carriage, one of the horses belonging to which had fallen dead suddenly, with a couple of impatient travellers, who called loudly to the diligence-driver in French to stop and take them up.

"See the luggage removed, Armand," commanded one of them to his servant, who was holding up one of the carriage-lamps. "You must come on with us. We will send back from the next stage to help the man. The coupe"—to the conductor who was holding open the door of the interior.

"The coupe, monsieur, is already occupied."

"How many places have you here?"

"Three, and one still in the banquette."

"Good. After you, Monsieur le Vicomte"—to his companion, a white-haired gentleman, who hesitated slightly before committing himself to the unlighted depths of the interior.

At the same moment a slight rustle, like the frou-frou of a woman's garments, was heard in the darkness.

"Pardon," said the Vicomte courteously, as the light from Armand's lamp flushed over a gray figure shrinking into the farthest corner of the stuffy interior—"pardon, madame, that we derange you."

A bow from the corner, accompanied by a slight nervous movement, was the only response; and the two gentlemen disposed themselves and their wraps on the vacant seats opposite.

"Stop!" exclaimed Monseur Armand when he found himself beside an old acquaintance in the banquette. "It is you then, Monsieur George?"

"And you," retorted Mr. George Brown, lighting his cigar at the valet's lamp—"you have not made your journey so much faster than we, after all?"

"No, thanks to this cursed accident. We are going to miss the express train, and to have to content ourselves with the slow one. It is a misfortune. And you, monsieur, do you also take the railway at the first occasion?"

"No, we remain to rest; our journey does not press," replied the Englishman, puffing deliberately at his cigar.

"After all, then, it arrives to me to travel with the commission of Mademoiselle Florine," said the valet, with a little laugh and a significance which brought the blood into the Englishman's ruddy cheek.

"The commission of Mademoiselle Florine!" he repeated slowly after the other.

And at that moment, by some accident, probably the awkwardness of the German traveler, who thrust his meerschaum into it, the carriage-lamp became extinguished.

"It is no matter," said Monsieur Armand; "the moon rises presently."

If the lamp had been burning still, his fellow-travelers would have seen a change in the usually imperturbable countenance of Mr. George Brown; one would have thought he had been moonstruck by anticipation.

"The deuce! I hadn't bargained for that!" he muttered behind his closed lips.

"It is less to be regretted," pursued the lively French valet, returning to the charge, "that the commission of Mademoiselle Florine had not been placed in my hands, since, after all, we travel in company."

"I do not understand," said the Englishman suddenly; and, under cover of the darkness, his cheek glowed again dangerously.

"Ah, pardon!" retorted the irrepressible Frenchman. "If monsieur does not understand, who shall interpret? But, when a charming demoiselle——"

"Speak English!" growled the courier, goaded into British surliness.

"Mademoiselle is charming!" said the valet in Mr. Brown's native tongue. "I offer monsieur my felicitations; and when a demoiselle disturbs herself so early in the morning, it is, we comprehend, for something more than a box for the dressmaker!"

Mr. George Brown grew hot and cold alternately.

What did the chattering fellow mean?

If one thing Mr. Brown ardently longed for it was to punch his head on his own account; if another, then it was a more serious matter, and Mr. Brown would like to choke him off summarily.

"You speak Greek to me," he answered, shrugging his shoulders and trying with all his might to penetrate through the darkness to the hidden meaning lurking beyond the Frenchman's words.

"Is it not good English?" retorted the other. "Must I then translate? Hold. I meet a young lady on the stairs at an impossible hour; she explains that she has just expedited a packet to Paris by the diligence which leaves so early.' I meet the diligence by accident, and, behold, Monsieur Brown, and, it is to be presumed, the commission of mademoiselle! I make monsieur my compliment on the confidence which has been reposed in him. That is all."

Mr. Brown's clenched fist hovered in the darkness critically near the head of his little tormentor, who, unconscious of the perilous proximity, laughed boisterously at his own penetration.

"How much does he know or guess?" debated the courier anxiously, as the diligence swayed heavily round a sharp corner. "And what is to become of us all when this moon arrives on the scene?"

The valet, who had nearly lost his balance at the last corner, was sobered into silence, or perhaps satisfied that he had gone as far as the English bull-dog would tolerate; and the Englishman was revolving in his own mind plans and arrangements for which there was little time.

They must be perfected before the for once unwelcome moon appeared, like a revealing spirit, amongst them.

Inside the diligence the two gentlemen talked incessantly, the lady remaining profoundly silent, possibly sleeping, although that could scarcely be, for, at a sentence which dropped from the elder of the two men, a little sound like a gasp or a sigh came from the corner in which she was ensconsed; and one would have said that she had started—in her sleep, perhaps.

"It is dark," said the speaker. "I like not too much, these mountain ways in the obscurity. Happily the moon is coming to light us presently."

Apparently, Mr. Brown's "lady" regarded the advent of the moon with no greater favor than did her attendant.

Her heart beat so loudly that, if her companions had not been absorbed in their conversation, they must have heard it.

She even sat up, moving noiselessly, and leaned her head against the window-frame, looking out breathlessly into the night for the first sign of the pale ray she dreaded.

"What will become of me," she was saying to herself, "when the light comes? Shall we never reach another stopping-place? If the next be only a wayside inn, I will get out there and wait for the next diligence. Oh, this is dreadful!"

As the heavy carriage rumbled on and on, she could have shrieked to it in her excitement to stop, to let her down into the dark night—anywhere away from the dread which was hanging over her—from the catastrophe which threatened her.

Still there was no pause in the dull rumbling which seemed to confuse her brain.

She wrapped her veil closer about her head and face, although her cheeks and lips were burning with fever and she was stifling for want of air.

Then a faint wan light stole, as with a sort of stealthy surprise, into the night.

It was there all at once, like a ghostly presence, where before there was nothing but the darkness—pale and impotent as yet, but surely brightening into a clearer and stronger ray.

"Confusion!" muttered Mr. George Brown, turning uneasily in his seat and scowling down at the landscape as dim outlines begin to assume definite shape and form.

"Ah, behold!" exclaimed Monsieur de Grandvilliers, stretching himself and looking from the window at the pale glimmer. "It comes like, perhaps, sometimes, our best happiness—towards the end of our journey."

"The comparison is true, if one may credit what one hears, in the case of Monsieur le Duc," answered the other, in a low tone. "Happiness has waited for him until now, it is said. Is it so?"

"Well, yes," said the Duke. "I may as well confess it to you, my friend. The thing is arranged."

"You return then to the Engadine?"

"Yes, as quickly as these matters allow me. At my age, one has no time to lose."

"I offer you my best congratulations. All the world must envy the husband of so beautiful a bride as the lady to whom I have had the honor of being presented at Pontresina."

"Thanks, a thousand times."

They had forgotten the presence of their silent and, as yet invisible fellow-traveler, who shrank back at the sound of their voices, and whose breath came like the fluttering of a caged bird, as her heart beat so fiercely that she thought they must have heard its throbbing pulsations.

"How strange and theatrical the scene is," said one of the gentlemen presently, waving towards the window a hand which looked like a phantom shadow in the dim light—the black shadows, the still, pale gleam! Does it not remind you of the stage—when some startling climax is about to take place—some thrilling denouement?

"All the forces seem to be preparing themselves.

"The situation is quite dramatic. See, the moon is hiding behind that band of clouds. We too are in the shadow of this hill which we are climbing.

"Presently we shall have mounted to the top—the fair Dian will glide forth suddenly from her retreat, and behold the tableau!"

A cold, clammy moisture broke out on the forehead of the third traveler. Her heart-beats seemed to stifle her.

Would nothing—nothing stay the progress of those inevitable wheels?

Must the dreaded climax come? Was there no help?

She had a mad impulse to dash herself against the door and out under those heavy crushing wheels—the torture of waiting for what she yet could not escape was so intolerable.

Slowly the huge vehicle ground and creaked upwards, slowly the wan light dawned into silvery clearness.

"See," said Monsieur de Grandvilliers, "it is as I predicted! We are almost at the summit, and our lady of the moon is already beginning to withdraw her silvery curtains. We will close our eyes and open them presently upon the surprise she has for us."

What did he mean?

It seemed to the despairing heart in the opposite corner as if he knew, or guessed, what a few minutes more must proclaim. If she might only die before it came! was her first despairing thought.

Then the full tide of life rushed back into the young heart and asserted itself against the cold collapse of death.

Life was precious, even with that terrible ordeal to be passed through, and coming so close to her now.

CHAPTER XV.

MY dear fellow, you here? What a godsend!" cried Fred Alwyn, pouncing upon Tempest Mervyn as the latter walked down the Rue de Rivoli on the morning after his arrival in Paris. "When did you come? Where are you putting up?" questioned the young attache, speaking fast to cover a certain little embarrassment at the meeting.

"Paris is a howling wilderness, as hot as the Sahara itself, and almost as empty. There is nobody left but a few poor wretches of diplomats who are unable to get away. Our chief is at Dieppe, Hamilton and Campbell at Biarritz. Sir Edward and I are left to represent the British Lion and to frizzle in this frying-pan. Paris in the dog-days? Ugh!"

"I came last night. I am at Meurice's," said Mervyn, answering the interrogatories half smothered in this torrent of talk.

"Passing through, like the rest, I suppose?" said Alwyn.

"Not exactly," replied Tempest. "I am going back in a day or two. Dine with me at the Cafe Riche to-night, Alwyn."

"With pleasure," returned his friend. "Au revoir then," turning into the Rue d'Aguesseau and adding to himself, "He looks ten years older, and as sober as a judge—poor fellow! I wonder what he is doing in Paris?"

Tempest Mervyn walked on across the Place de la Concorde and up the half-deserted Champs Elysees, the peculiar loneliness of a great city where one meets no familiar face, and where the once hospitable door is closed, present to him at each step. At the Barriere de l'Etoile he stopped and debated some point with himself.

"Yes, I will go on," he decided. He called a fiacre and jumped in. "To St. Cloud!" he called to the man.

What did he hope from a visit to St. Cloud? Nothing, he told himself. Madame de Rougemont, that devoted follower of fashion, would hardly have stayed behind the rest of the world; and, if she had done so, it was no part of his intention to present himself to her. Nevertheless he was disappointed to find all the green jalousies closely drawn before the windows of madame's apartments, and the indefinable stamp of emptiness and absence about the casket which had once held his treasure. Dutertre, standing with his feet in slippers and his hands in his pockets at the open portiere looked over him, through him almost—everywhere but at him—with such deliberate intention that Mervyn was provoked into compelling him to acknowledge his presence.

Was it possible? Was it monsieur? Monsieur must pardon that he had not at once recognised him—the sun being in his eyes and he not dreaming of monsieur's being at St. Cloud at this time, exclaimed the ready Frenchman. Madame? Madame was still travelling. She had been away a long time and there was no word of her return yet. In effect, Dutertre took upon himself to believe that she would return only for "the great event"—this with significant smiles and an intolerable assumption of a mutual confidential understanding.

"The great event!" What did the man mean? Mervyn turned away without asking, a chill instinct warning him off the dangerous ground indicated by Dutertre's sleet smiles and demonstrative satisfaction.

How he loathed the fellow's obtrusive cheerfulness and mistrusted his obsequious civility, as, cap in hand, he ran after him down the quay, asking if there was by chance any message which monsieur desired to leave for his mistress? Not that he—Dutertre—was in communication with madame at the present moment—in fact he did not even know her address—she changed it so often in her travels. But there would no doubt be an occasion, or on madame's return——

No; it was not worth the trouble, Mervyn answered shortly, scarcely looking at the man and hastening his footsteps. If it had been so, he could not have borne to hear aught from Dutertre's lips.

He dismissed his carriage and wandered on into the Park, where every tree and turn reminded him only too vividly of the past and the ruined, roofless palace seemed to symbolise the deeper ruin of as fair a fabric of love and hope as ever graced a cloudless youth.

On and on he wandered, neither knowing nor caring whither he went, amongst the glades haunted by that fair sweet face—and false as it was fair, he told himself in his indignant pain.

It was on this very spot—he paused to identify it—that she had given him the confident assurance, "Nothing can ever make me less yours than I am now!"—an assurance which had not been strong enough to bear the first strain which had been put upon it. And yet how true and strong she had seemed then!

All through the heat of the summer day he nursed his wrath and quenched the last sparks of lingering tenderness amongst the ghosts of a dead faith and perished happiness. It was as if he celebrated a solemn funeral service there under the shadow of the parched trees which had rejoiced in their first spring freshness when his love was young and his trust undimmed.

The worst was over. He had laid his dead to rest for ever—so he told himself—when he remembered his appointment with Fred Alwyn; and, haggard and half exhausted with the day's emotion, he made his way back to Paris.

He sat down to dinner in that benumbed quiescent frame of mind which succeeds acute suffering.

He could bear anything now, he believed.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Neal's Punishment.

BY S. M. GIDLEY.

I'M going to trust you," said Neal Guthrie to his friend, Cuthbert Rollyn, as they sat chatting and smoking away Christmas eve in the former's room.

"Thank you; for how much?"

"Pray be serious, Cuth. I'm not joking."

"Delighted to hear it!" the other answered. "I'm as short as pie crust at present and a small loan——"

"Hang it all! can't you stop chaffing and let a fellow finish?"

"Well, go ahead; only make it for as much and for as long a time as possible."

"I am going to trust you with a secret," said Neal, heedless of the badinage—"a very great secret. Will you promise to keep it?"

"For anything short of helping to conceal a murder, I'm your man," said Cuthbert, sending forth a puff that formed itself into a ring, widening as it floated along and wreathing itself at last round Neal's head like a misty halo.

"I'm am going to—to——"

The halo had descended as far as the speaker's nose, and the sentence exploded in a loud sneeze.

"You're sure you can keep a secret?" he said, recovering his breath.

"Try me."

"Read these. They'll explain all."

And Neal Guthrie placed in Cuthbert's hand a well-worn packet of letters.

Why aren't lover's epistles always written on parchment, seeing they have to be thumbed and read over so often?

At the first letter Cuthbert opened he gave a start.

"Dearest Neal," it began; then followed such a flow of tender, gushing sentiment as could only have been written by a young lady very much in love.

At the end was subscribed "Your loving Ellen."

And the hand; yes, it was surely that of Ellen Laing, Neal's cousin, and Cuthbert's own engaged sweetheart!

Cuthbert Rollyn's face was troubled, and his hand trembled, as one after another he unfolded and read the letters.

They grew more and more endearing; and the last one accepted, with becoming hesitancy, "Dearest Neal's" proposition to elope and get married on the following Thursday.

The lady's relatives, it seemed, lacked due appreciation of that gentleman's perfections; hence this resort to stratagem.

"Isn't she a trump?" said Neal, rubbing his hands with glee.

Cuthbert growled something—whether it was to the effect that there was less trump than trumpery in the case, wasn't quite distinguishable—and hurried off before Neal had time to request the honor of his presence at a certain obscure little church on the day named in "loving Ellen's" letter.

"By Jove, it's glorious!" he exclaimed, and then broke into another guffaw, followed by another, till, out of breath at last, he held his sides from sheer exhaustion.

He was evidently too full of his own happiness to notice or regard Cuthbert Rolyn's discomfort, and, mayhap, had never heard of the latter's attachment to his cousin.

When Neal went down to breakfast next morning, he found on his plate a letter which had just been left.

"By Jove, it's glorious!" he said, glancing at the superscription, and uttering the ejaculation he had been repeating at short intervals ever since his interview with Cuthbert.

The letter was a short note in the latter's hand, and signed with his initials.

"If you care sufficiently for an old friend," it said, "and can spare time enough from the contemplation of your own happiness to have the lake dragged for his body, perhaps you won't think it too much to do so. But don't put yourself out, pray—and least of all your 'loving Ellen'—on my account."

Neal Guthrie sprang up, upsetting his coffee and the cup into which he had just broken two soft boiled eggs, and overturning a chair with a crash, to the general discomposure of the landlady and his landlady's great displeasure, and rushed out, never stopping till he reached the lake at the border of the town.

He had skirted but a little way, when, lying on a jutting rock concealed by a thick growth of bushes, at the base of which the water was more than twenty feet deep, he found an old coat which he had often seen Cuthbert wear; and a little way out, tossed to and fro by the wind, floated a felt hat, just like the one Cuthbert had on the day before.

Neal's face turned ashen pale, and he shook like a man in an ague.

"Poor Cuth!" he wailed, piteously. "I never dreamed it would come to this!"

Then he flew to find the coroner, and with him and a troop of horror-seeking followers, returned to the lake.

They dragged it from end to end, but only raked up an old crockery-crate. Then they procured an old cannon.

"Give him a few gall-bursters from that," said Stephen Kidder, the village oracle, "and if it don't h'ist him, nothin' else will."

But it didn't "h'ist him;" for though round after round was fired, up, down, and across, it was only so much powder wasted.

Neal's face was ruesomeness itself as he started to tell the news to Ellen Laing.

"How can I ever break it to her?" he said, as he reached the door.

For some reason he seemed apprehensive that Ellen would take it particularly hard.

"Oh! Ellen! Ellen!" he exclaimed, when they met—"have you heard it?"

"Heard what?"

"The news—the dreadful news! Cuthbert Rollyn's gone and drowned himself!"

Ellen didn't faint, didn't shriek, didn't do anything he had counted on. Maybe she was too stunned.

Neal, like one anxious to get through a heartrending scene, hurried on.

"You know those old letters of grandma's to grandpa before they ran away together? You remember there was no date to them, and grandpa's name was Neal, like mine, and grandma's was Ellen, the same as yours; and she wrote a hand that couldn't be told from your own. Well, for a joke yesterday, I showed them to Cuthbert as if confiding to him an important personal secret. He fell into the trap at once, and thought they were from you to me. I meant to tell him the truth to-day, and have a good laugh at his expense. But, oh, Cousin Ellen, it drove him to despair, and he went off and drowned himself! I don't ask you to forgive me. I know you couldn't and I don't deserve it; but if it'll be any comfort to you, I'll go into mourning for the rest of my days!"

At the end of his recital Ellen Laing burst into a fit of the wildest laughter.

"Oh, don't!—don't!" pleaded Neal, starting back appalled. "Heavens!—she has lost her wits!"

"Don't you think we've punished him enough?" said Cuthbert Rollyn, entering from an adjoining room, and laughing almost as wildly as Ellen.

"You see," he added, turning to Neal, "I wasn't quite fool enough to go and drown myself without first seeking an explanation from Ellen. I presume you know the rest."

* * *

Treatment of Convicts.—Convicts who attempt to escape from the English prison of Dartmoor fare ill when recaptured. One who was recently unsuccessful, and caused a great deal of trouble before he was taken again, has been sentenced to have weights amounting in total to 14 pounds riveted to his clothing, and not removed during the remainder of his servitude. His dress has been made more conspicuous than before, and the remission of punishment which he had gained has been withdrawn from his credit.

Bric-a-Brac.

Tyrolese House Painting.—The Tyrolese paint the fronts of their houses in fresco, mostly with passages out of Tyrolese history—battles and processions, and pomps and vanities of this world and the next—all set forth in rude, vigorous design, with a sort of reckless prodigality of coloring, as if red and yellow ochre cost nothing. A favorite decoration is that of a gigantic St. Florian emptying a bucket of water upon a diminutive house on fire, which reaches about up to his knees. No house, they say, can be burnt which bears this talisman.

Lotos-eaters.—This is the title of a poem by Tennyson. It is an allegory, full of pictures and music, which figures forth the tendency to abandon the battle of life, to retire from a fruitless, ever-renewed struggle. Lotos-eaters in the Odyssey of Homer are described as the people who ate of the lotos-tree, the effect of which was to make them forget their friends and homes, and to lose all desire of returning to their native country, their only wish being to live in idleness in Lotos-land. Hence the term lotos-eater is applied to one who cares for nothing more than to live in ease, luxury and refinement—"the world forgetting, by the world forgot."

A Cure for Fits.—In 1869 the following notice was placed on Stockland Church door, Scotland. "For the Fits—A young woman wishes to ask the favor of 30 young men to give her one penny each and no more next Sunday afternoon, 21st of March. If you would please to ask as many young men to come as you can she would be happy to return thanks." The request was complied with. The pennies were exchanged for a half-crown obtained from the officiating clergyman, who happened to be a stranger. The half-crown, when made into a ring by the village blacksmith, was supposed to be a preservative from fits so long as it was worn.

The Two-headed Eagle.—The two-headed eagle signifies a double empire. The Emperors of Austria, who claimed to be the successors of the Cæsars of Rome, used the double-headed eagle, which is the eagle of the Eastern emperors and that of the Western, typifying the "Holy Roman Empire," of which the original emperors of Germany (now merged in the House of Austria) considered themselves as the representatives. Charlemagne was the first to use it, for when he became master of the whole of the German empire, he added the second head to the eagle, A. D. 802, to denote that the empires of Rome and Germany were united to him.

The Hardest Tongue.—It is said that the language of the Basques of the Pyrenees is the most difficult in the world. Satan spent seven years at Mauleon in the vain endeavor to acquire the power of conversing with the Basques, so as to be able to lead them to perdition. The task was too much for him; he never could learn the seven articles employed in it; he failed where William Humboldt succeeded; the result is, that he is unable to tempt a Basque, because he cannot speak to him, and that, consequently, every Basque goes straight to heaven. Unfortunately, now that the population is beginning to talk French (which Satan knows well) this privilege is disappearing.

The Holy Grail.—The Holy Grail was one of the leading themes of mediæval romance, fabled to have been the cup or chalice used by Christ in the Last Supper, and in which He changed the wine into blood. This chalice, preserved by Joseph of Arimathea, had also received blood which flowed from the side of Christ on the cross. This is what the apocryphal gospel of Nicodemus says, but no early mention is made by either profane or ecclesiastical writers. In the twelfth century, at the dawn of romantic literature, it reappeared as the central subject of the prophecies of Merlin, and the object of adventurous quest of the Knights of the Round Table. Romance mixed it up with the struggles in Spain between Moors and Christians, and with the foundation of the order of Templars in Palestine.

An Arab Election.—In an Arab tribe, when the sheik dies, the elders of the tribe, heads of its great houses and sections, assemble in one of their number's tent, and sitting in a circle, discuss the subject of his succession. Theoretically, the choice of a successor is open to any one of them, for the tribe, however large, is all one great family descended from a common ancestor, and though no one from without could be admitted to the supreme rule, any one from within the tribe can hold office. But in practice the choice is limited to a few persons. The reverence of the Arabs for blood, and for selected strains of blood, prevents them, except in very exceptional cases, from changing the dynasty of their rulers. If the dead man has left behind him a son of full age and respectable qualities, he will, without dispute, be acknowledged sheik. If not, then an uncle, a nephew, or a cousin will be chosen. Only in extreme circumstances of general danger, or of failure of heirs male, can the member of a new family reasonably aspire to power. There is no formal system of voting, but the elders, having ascertained who among the dead man's relations commands the strongest following, proceed to acknowledge him by the ceremony of giving him their hands. He then becomes their sheik. It sometimes happens, however, that parties are so evenly divided between rival leaders that the tribe divides, one section going this way and the other that, until one of the leaders gives in his submission; otherwise the quarrel is decided by the sword.

TO-MORROW.

O summer day, that art so brief,
From earth her utmost beauty borrow
With wildwood song and fragrant leaf,
Weave happy visions of to-morrow!
Of fair to-day,
That will not stay,
Leave some bright vision of to-morrow!

O winter day, that art so long,
Canst not from dying summer borrow
Some fancied bloom and light and song,
Some heavenly vision of to-morrow?
O desolate day,
That must away,
Leave some bright vision of to-morrow!

ARDEN COURT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LADY MARGERIE."

CHAPTER XLI.—[CONTINUED.]

IT was wet with ink, and the words were newly written; and what is more, this is her own handwriting; I could swear to it."

"Then you mean to say," began James, looking intelligently.

"Stop a bit," said Josiah; "look here!"

He then drew another paper from the box—also a mere fragment.

"Do you see this, James Deane?" "This is my dear master's hand. What do you think of that?"

"Then you think," said James, again examining the paper with a keen eye, "you could swear that this lady—the bride—this heiress of Arden—is a——"

"Hush, hush!" said the lad, softly. "Hush! it's not well to use hard names, and walls have ears, you know Jim."

"Yes," said the young lawyer.

"And can't it be made anything of?" asked Josiah.

"Can't say positively; perhaps it can," was the reply. "Only we ought to get hold of the will. It will be in Doctors' Commons.

"It's a ticklish point; but we shall see. I am no better pleased that Miss Hilda's cheated than you are; and if I can help you I will."

"You'll keep the secret, Jim?" said Josiah.

"As true as steel, Joe," he replied. "But we should want some money I'm afraid, unless we get hold of a very good and liberal man, that felt sure of what he was about.

"You must leave it to me a little—eh, Joe? I shall not be going home for a few days, and I'll see you again, and think over it."

Josiah looked but half-satisfied.

"If you'd give me fifty writings, side by side, I'd tell one from the other, Jim; and I could swear to that."

James remembered his companion's singular facility in this, and possessed sufficient legal knowledge to know that, if this was fairly tested, it would add great weight to the evidence of the half-wit.

"We'll see, Joe; we'll see what can be done," he said.

"And God will be on her side, for she's just an angel," remarked Josiah, fervently, as his friend rose and bade him good night.

At the same hour the last of the carriages was driving from the house, and Avice Henry was reclining wearily on a couch, in her dressing room, while her husband stood near her on the rug, his dark eyes fixed upon her with a look very different from the usual tenderness of a bridegroom.

"Well, Avice, the matter is concluded at last," he said, "and you have only to keep the vows, and I the secret, and we shall be very happy, no doubt."

There was something in the sneer that brought the warm blood to her face.

"I scarcely understand you," she said, coldly.

"Come, that's good," said he. "Here we've been courting for the last nine months, and married to-day, and you don't understand me! Why, Avice, I did not think you were so dull. But I'll soon enlighten you. It's just this: I've a great taste for my own way, and I don't at all brook any interference, especially from a wife.

"Therefore, I think we had better have all perfectly understood between us at first, to save trouble after. It just comes to this—you'll have the goodness to obey me to the very utmost of my wishes, and I'll then take care of you and your secret also.

"But in any other case I shall know how to manage a refractory wife.

"I am not going to be made a fool of, I can assure you."

"I scarcely comprehend you," she said, looking up dreamily at him.

"If you mean that I am to give up power in my own house, and over the fortune that I have brought you, then you are completely wrong. I do not intend to be made a fool or slave by you, Charles Henry."

He did not smile.

There was a calm, determined look in his eyes far more terrible and ominous than anger, and his voice was low and suppressed.

"Avice," said he, "this is our wedding day, and it is not a usual thing for persons to quarrel on that day; but I must just say these few words for once and all. The moment that you gave me your secret, put you in my power; the moment that I placed the ring on your finger gave me absolute right over you and your actions and your fortune. That right and that power I do not mean to forego.

"From this night you will be relieved of all your duties, and authority and responsibility here. I am master now, and for our future life."

There was a flash of pride and spirit in her eyes, in spite of the quivering of her frame, as she said, "And do you forget that every shilling you receive, and every luxury you enjoy, I can take from you by a word?"

"Which word would seal your own utter ruin and shame," he replied, scornfully. "It is very probable, certainly, that you would speak it."

"Try me and you will see," she said, her cheeks flaming.

"Do not drive me too far, Charles Henry, or you will find that I can dare anything—everything—to escape the chain that galls me."

"No, no," said he, smilingly, "you are not such a fool, Avice; I give you credit for more sense than that. You will much prefer beind a sensible, quiet, happy wife, guided by a husband, and free from all care, than being——well, we won't speak the ugly word just now. But at any rate my mind is made up. You will have the full enjoyment of the luxuries, the prestige, the wealth of your position here, and I shall take the head of the house, as if it were mine by birthright; and you Avice Merton, as my chosen wife, and in that character only, will be the mistress of this house. That is fully understood between us; and now that such an amicable arrangement is effected, we will, if you please, retire for the night. Shall I ring for your maid?"

"No, no, not yet," she replied.

"Pardon me," said her husband. "I wish no scandal in the household. Let everything be done so as to excite no remark."

He coolly rang the bell, and walked from the room.

Avice had just self-control enough to permit her maid to perform the necessary offices, to take off her attire, to arrange her hair and give her the wrapper that was to replace the wedding dress, ere she gave vent to her feelings.

Then, when once more alone, see threw herself on the couch and gave way to the tempest of passion and grief that raged in her breast.

Was it for this she had planned, and worked, and sinned? Was it to give all to a man who did not even affect to love her, and whom she already hated?—to feel from henceforth that she was a slave, and that the hated tyrant was gloating over and enjoying the fruits of her toil and crime?

Ah, how she writhed under the conviction!—how she cursed the hour that had put her in his power and sealed her fate!

What a wedding evening was that for the heiress bride! Avice Merton's punishment had begun; and Hilda was even now avenged.

CHAPTER XLII.

IS there a place in the whole world, however historical in its associations, that has such suggestive stories of grief and horror, of terrible romance, of depth of passion, of devotion, of patience, and of tears, and fortitude, of woman's agony, and man's stern woe, as the dark prison of Newgate?

Its heavy black architecture, its solid walls, its small windows, its barred and ironed heavy doors, its impenetrable quadrangles, are indeed symbolical of its name. It is like a dark, frowning structure of other times, in the heart of the busy civilization of the modern city; it is like a mute and terrible voice in the heart of gaiety and revelling; it is the very emblem and embodiment of man's sin, and man's suffering and the long catalogue of woes that they bring in their train to others, as well as to those who have erred.

It was before this prison-house that a close carriage drove up on a sultry August morning, and from it alighted a tall and closely-veiled woman.

She was so enveloped in the cloak she wore, and the crape veil over her face was so completely and entirely drawn over her features, that it was impossible to decide on her exact age, or appearance.

She was certainly tall, and her figure was graceful, and her movements easy and dignified, so that she could not have passed the early prime of woman's life, or lost one of the charms that age robs so early; yet the step was somewhat hesitating and tremulous as she entered that ponderous pile, where the face of a pure, refined woman is seldom seen save when she goes thither at the dictate of philanthrophy, or to carry consolation to some being to whom she is allied by ties of kindred and affection.

No wonder that the fair woman who passed within those dark massive gates shuddered with an involuntary chill that even her courage and devotion could not repress. And yet she was on a holy mission, and one that well befitted and hallowed the deed, and might give courage to the heart.

It was an errand of pardoning love and sacrificing devotion on which she was bent in that repulsive visit.

There was something in her appearance and manner that commanded respect from the very warder; and his tone was unusually courteous as he addressed her.

"Do you wish to see any of the prisoners, madam?"

"Yes," was the reply.—"What name, madam?"

Her frame shivered for a moment; then she replied softly, "Mr. Glanville."

At any other time, perhaps, the rough warder might have smiled sneeringly at the epithet "Mr.," but he only bowed in his blunt and ungainly style, and asked, "Have you an order, madam?"

"Yes," she replied, giving a paper duly signed by the governor of the prison.

It was an admission for Madame Courton to the prisoner Reginald Glanville at any hour allowed by the prison rules.

The man bowed and led the way across a stone court, with the black walls frowning on every side, whence they ascended a flight of well-worn stairs, and passed through a long gallery-like passage, at the end of which the officer paused and unclosed a door.

"This is the cell, madam," said he, flinging it wide open.

The lady shrunk back for a moment involuntarily, then she drew a long breath and walked tremblingly into the apartment.

The door clanged behind her, and a sudden thrill of terror smote the visitor's heart at the dismal sound.

Then she stood for a moment contemplating the inmate of the gloomy cell.

He sat at the side of his low pallet bed, his elbows on his knees, and his head bowed listlessly on his thin white hands.

He had been thus day after day since his committal, heeding not the lapse of time, seemingly careless and apathetic as to his fate, and making no preparations for the trial that was now imminent.

The lady saw the outline of a thin figure in the dim light, heard a low groan; and then, forgetful of all the present, of all the past, she sprang forward, impelled by the tide of emotion that weighed upon her heart.

Her step was noiseless, but the rustle of her garments roused the unhappy man.

He looked up, rose to his feet, and then, as the unexpected guest threw back the veil that shaded her face, he sank nerveless and half paralyzed, on the pallet from which he had arisen.

A sudden faintness seized him.

His lips moved, but refused to utter a sound.

"Reginald," said the sweet sad voice, "do you know me?"

"Julia, Julia, do not haunt me," he said shiveringly. "I am punished enough. You are avenged. In mercy, leave me! I am nearly mad with this new torture."

He looked wildly around, as if his senses were indeed leaving him, and Julia sat down by him on that miserable pallet.

Ah, how different from the soft couch on which they had last sat together in their elegant room! and yet not more changed was the scene, than the occupants of the cell.

Reginald Glanville looked at least ten years older than on that memorable night.

His face was thin, wasted, and careworn; his hair tinged with silver: his form wasted and shrunken; his limbs feeble, and trembling.

And she, Julia, the beautiful and admired heiress, the graceful and dignified leader of fashion, what was she now?

Beautiful still; she could not conceal that; and oh, how lovely, how far more lovely than in those days of pride and youth!

Her lips were white, but their expression was unutterably touching and mournful; her eyes were soft and tender; and the very paleness of the cheeks gave a refinement to her beauty.

Yes, the trials of the last year had chastened and corrected her; and now, as she gazed on that guilty and unhappy man, a new light came over her features, and she again murmured:

"Reginald, dear Reginald, I have come to comfort, not to upbraid you."

Her hand rested on his, the other arm was passed round his neck, and his head was drawn to her shoulder.

He looked up for a moment in wondering incredulity, and then he suddenly threw his arms about her, and, resting his weary head on her bosom, wept like a child, and yet with a man's strong, passionate weeping, a man's terrible emotion.

Julia's eyes were moist also, but felt not the same fearful agony. Her misery had been very different—perhaps not painful, but yet less agonising, less self-reproachful.

At last the passion passed away: Reginald's frame shook less violently; his tears ceased, and his groans were hushed, under her womanly soothings.

"Julia, this is too much," he said, "too much. I cannot bear it. Your very presence tortures me."

"Am I then so hateful to you, Reginald?" she sighed.

"Hateful!" he repeated. "No, no; but you must hate me Julia."

"No," she replied, mournfully, "I wish I could; but it is in vain. In shame, disgrace, in desertion, in absence, I have loved you still, Reginald. I have striven, but in vain, even when I knew you guilty of such foul wrong to a devoted—ay, to two devoted and loving women."

"No, no, Julia," he said, starting; "hear me! From my heart I will swear it. I never even dreamed of doing you a wrong, unless indeed to attempt to woo you, after I had given my heart to another, was wrong. But I did not know, I did not dream that I had ever really bound myself to that poor girl when I married you. It was a terrible blow to me when I learned it, Julia; and that cruel robbery that I would have made of your precious jewels, was to save you from the knowledge of the involuntary disgrace I had brought on you. They were to bribe your infamous cousin, who had worked your ruin and mine."

"Is this true, Reginald?" she said, looking up, and smiling almost brightly.

"Before Heaven I would swear it," he replied.

"Listen, Julia. I will confess all, and then you shall judge.

"It was many years since I wooed and won a young and lovely girl, who was betrothed in hand but not in heart to a noble-minded but unattractive man. I really loved her Yes, I must confess all, even to my own shame, and even your sorrow, Julia.

"I did love her deeply, fervently, as I had never loved before, and with a freshness and sweetness that only youth can know.

"When I won her, I really would have married her in public and honorable wedlock, had I been free; but my extravagance and my tastes held me captive.

"I must not offend my father, and I could not marry a portionless bride. Still I do not mean altogether ill. I thought that in time I might find some way of gratifying my tastes and feelings at the same time.

"So I hid from her the truth; and when she bore to me a noble boy, I again secretly vowed that, were it possible, she should one day be my wife. I little dreamed that she was so already.

"Then time went on, and my difficulties increased.

"I saw you, Julia; but even then I shrunk from the foul sin and crime to her and to you.

"On I floated in the dark stream of sin. Each day I became more involved; each day I felt that the very sight of the unhappy girl I had so wronged became more and more hateful to me in the pangs of self-reproach it inflicted. I had, too, a demon urging me on in the shape of a companion—a friend, who shared my pleasures and was a leech on my purse.

"Yes, your cousin, Hugh Fleming, had invented a foul scheme to relieve me of my burden, on condition that I would give him the aid he needed.

He proposed to abduct and take charge of my boy, her boy, and make her believe that he was dead. 'It will be easier to get rid of her then,' he said.

"Julia, do not hate me, I cannot but hate myself.

"The plot was carried out. The boy was stolen, and the mother's heart all but broken. And I waited for the rest.

"I could not bear to risk the next terrible blow. I went on, still visiting her in the secluded home I had chosen for her, after the loss of the child by shipwreck—you understand, Julia. Oh! can I ever hope for forgiveness?"

Julia could not speak, but her soft hand played over his fevered brow, and then he went on hurriedly.

"Julia, I shall never forget the scene, when at last I told her all—told her that I was about to contract another marriage, that she was not my wife. I can see her now, as she rose and went to the door of the room, saying, in a hollow, broken voice, 'Reginald Glanville, thank God my boy is dead! It was God's mercy. I am a broken-hearted woman, but he at least is spared the shame that weighs on his mother—the sin that polluted his father. In thought, word, and deed I have been innocent, and may the All-Merciful pardon you! But I will not knowingly continue in sin. Nay, do not touch me.'

"She shrunk away, and left the room, and I never saw her again, Julia; I never knew her fate."

There was a dead silence.

Her heart was cold and pained.

No woman could hear such a tale, and not feel a bitter pang of sorrow.

"When I married you, Julia," he resumed, "that had been at an end for at least six months, and I firmly believed that you were my wife till that demon in human shape, Hugh Fleming, undeceived me. And when I asked you for your diamonds, and saw your love and devotion, and felt the wrong I was doing you, I loved you as I had never done before. Yes, Julia, ever since you fled from me, your image has haunted my waking and sleeping hours, till I have but felt a wearing longing to see you, and hear your voice say, 'Reginald, I forgive you.'"

She was silent, and he drew away from her.

"Then you cannot forgive me, Julia," he said. "I am not surprised. It is my desert."

His hand was drawn from her grasp, and his face was bowed on his knees.

A long, deep, smothered groan burst from him, and Julia flung herself on her knees before him.

"Reginald, Reginald!" she cried; "as you hope for mercy, speak the truth. Do you indeed love me now?"

"Deeply, reverently, gratefully do I love you, Julia," he said, in broken accents. "But to what avail?"

"To what avail!" she repeated. "Ah, you know not woman's heart, if you say that, Reginald. I have hungered and thirsted for your love; and even now, when I am still a disgraced though not a guilty woman—even now, it seems to bring balm to my spirit if can believe in your truth."

"Would to Heaven," he said, looking in her searching eyes, "I had ever spoken such truth, Julia, as I speak now!"

She sat down by his side, his arms around her, hers round his neck, and her eyes fixed on his wan face.

They did not speak; but even in that fearful moment in that gloomy scene, there was a ray of sunshine in the hearts of both. Julia knew that she had not been wilfully, heartlessly betrayed; she knew that she had at last the love of the man whom, however unworthy, she had worshipped with a strange idolatory. And Reginald? Ah, it was indeed a soothing balm, after the long years of solitude and agony, in the crisis of his fate, to have woman's voice to soothe, woman's tears to pity, woman's arms to shelter him. At last Julia roused herself from her deep and sweet absorption.

"This will not do," she said; "it will not do, Reginald. We must speak of other things now. Your trial is coming on; we must prepare for your defence."—"There is little, if any, hope, Julia," he said, despondingly.

She gazed startled and inquiringly on him.

"Yes are innocent, Reginald?" she said.

"Yes, Julia, my beloved one; at least your heart may be spared that pain," he replied, sadly. "You need not blush for your husband as a felon. It is a plot, a conspiracy to complete my ruin. I swear to you that I am as innocent of this crime as you are, but there is little chance of proving it."

"I believe you," she said, "I believe you, Reginald; and something tells me that you will yet be saved."

"No, Julia, no," he replied; "I do not think it; and I dare not complain. It is but just that, when I have been guilty of so many crimes, I should be condemned for one of which I am innocent. It is a revenge that well befits you dearest, and the unhappy one who is no more, but not him—not him."

"Whom do you suspect?" she asked.

"Your cousin Hugh Flemming," he replied.

"Where is he?" she exclaimed, eagerly. "I will go to him, and force him to retract his foul deed."

"You will not find him, Julia," he said. "He will have taken care to be far away, long ere this, from the ruin he has wrought."

"We shall see," she said, firmly, "we shall see. But do not lose hope, Reginald.

"Confess yourself to him who alone can pardon and help, and you shall be heard. Oh, my husband—for such you must ever be in heart!—my dear, dear husband, strive to be patient and brave, and you shall even yet be delivered from this deep trouble."

He bowed his head—he could not speak.

"I shall bring a lawyer to-morrow," she suddenly resumed, "to hear all that you can say that may guide him, Reginald, in getting up your defence.

"Money will not be wanting, and you will be saved yet, if love and skill can avail.

"And your son, Reginald—your son—where is he?"

"Do not ask," he said, shuddering; "do not ask. I dare not meet the scorn of my own child."

"He will not scorn you in grief and sorrow, whatever he may have done in prosperity and pride," said Julia.

"If you know where he is, Reginald, tell me that I may seek him, and bring him to you. It is the hour for a son to be his father's support—his father's comforter."

"Alas!" said he, "I know not. I saw him once only, when he was a lad—a noble, handsome boy, whom my heart yearned to own, of whom any father might be proud.

"Then the evil genius of my life again crossed every hope, and every better feeling of my heart.

"The lad disappeared, and I know not even by what name he may be known, or where his unhappy fate may have carried him. Heaven help me! I have brought ruin on all that have ever been connected with me. Leave me Julia; leave me to my fate. I deserve nothing at your hands. Why should I drag you into my misery?"

"I will not give you up," she said, smiling mournfully, lovingly, on him.

"I will not leave you, Reginald. In the sight of Heaven I believe myself your wife; I vowed to you the duties of one; and though I would never have come near you in happiness and prosperity, I will now stand by your side, and even in the prison, in the dock, in exile, in shame, I will never leave you, so long as my voice can comfort, my hand uphold you."

Her noble face flushed, and her eyes flashed with the intensity of her enthusiasm and her passionate love. Reginald looked on her with the deepest veneration.

"Oh, Julia, you abase me to the earth," he said. "What a jewel I have tarnished! what a splendid, priceless treasure I have despised! Oh, if I could but repent, and live again the past! Oh, my wife, my wife! have some pity. Do not crush me to the very earth by your nobleness."

The stricken man sank down on the pallet couch, and his tears flowed calmly. Then Julia rose.

"I must go," she said, as the turnkey's step was heard, and the key grated in the lock. "Reginald, be of good cheer, dearest. At least, I will never forsake you."

"And you will come again?" he said, clasping her hand tightly, as if afraid that the new-born light and joy would escape him with her departure.

"Yes, Reginald, every day till——"

"My condemnation," he said, sadly. "Ah, Julia, it is you—and you alone—who should condemn me. It is you against whom I have really sinned; the rest is as nothing."

"And that is pardoned as if it had never been," said the noble woman, as she pressed her lips on his pale forehead, and glided away.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A THUNDER-STORM was brewing; the sun had set dull and lurid, and a deep, black pall was spread over the west; and not the slightest sound broke a calm as profound as that preceding a hurricane in the tropics.

Few ventured out on that ominous night, and the dwellers in Arden Court had settled themselves to the evening's quiet.

Dr. Henry and Avice were sitting, after their late dinner, in the cold, mute companionship that marked their intercourse.

The doctor was half asleep, as was often his custom, for he had contracted a habit of late that frequently ensues when the purse is full, and the conscience not too well at ease—he did more than justice to the good cheer that was set before him.

The rare wines and the luxurious cooking, which were now at his command, found but too full appreciation at his hands.

His face was flushed, and his eyes were heavy and half-closed, as they had been in truth many and many a night before.

Avice also sat there in her virtual loneliness, sometimes with a cold, bitter look on her thin features, as she gazed at the dull sleeper; sometimes with a vacant, abstracted stare on objects which never in truth met her eyes; and at others, with hands clasped and lips compressed till the blood came, she would rock backwards and forwards, as if in sudden agony.

And no wonder.

Was it for such a life as this that she had perilled body and soul?

Was it for such cold, dull slavery, that she had risked all she ought to hold dear in this world and the next?

Had she been less guilty, the most severe might have pitied the life she led.

Charles Henry ruled her with an iron rod.

She was never permitted to arrange the most trivial matters, to leave her house and grounds, to invite guests thither, without his permission.

In truth, she was virtually a prisoner.

Her very servants had been changed.

The maid who attended her was in fact a spy, a jailer, in her husband's absence; nay, even the veriest menial was far less fettered and enjoyed far more liberty, than the mistress of the mansion.

But with her husband it was far different.

He had indeed abandoned himself to the sensual enjoyments of the wealth he had won.

The pleasures of the table within doors, and debased indulgences without, occupied his time.

He cared little for the society of his equals or superiors in the neighborhood, so long as he could secure to himself the ease and animal pleasures, the outward respect and the nominal prestige, which the possession of Arden Court insured to him.

It was well for his peace of mind that it was so, for the families in the county, whose position would have naturally led to an intimacy at one of the most ancient seats in that neighborhood, looked shyly and with reserve at its new occupants.

Philip Arden, the recluse, had been little known, and therefore little loved, among the hereditary friends of his house; still, he had been respected as an equal, a man of position, and of unspotted character among them.

But Avice Merton, the strangely left heiress, and Charles Henry, her parvenu husband, were scarcely admitted in the circles of that part of the county.

There was nothing, in truth, to mollify or to palliate this decision, which virtually tabooed the new master and mistress of Arden.

They had no sons to marry portionless daughters of the gentry round, no heiress daughters to form desirable matches for the sons, no tempting gaieties for the young, and no prospect of advantage for the old. No wonder, therefore, that the great gates were opened less frequently than in Philip Arden's time; no wonder that the dining-table was more rarely graced with guests, and that the brilliantly furnished saloons were left in solitude and gloom.

It was such a life as this that Avice now led; and on this evening she was strangely oppressed with the memory of the past, the misery of the present.

The thought of the visions she had indulged, the tempting visions of wealth, and luxury, and power of prestige and distinction; of friends courting her notice, of suitors crowding to her feet; of a life spent in a soft atmosphere of luxury and ease, and perhaps of love and friendship.

And she had obtained this for him—for that sensual, debased man who lay with thickened breath and flushed cheek on that crimson velvet chair, for his ease and gratification, for his tyrannical instincts, his base passions, to revel in full freedom and indulgence at her expense. How she hated him at the moment.

Desperate and dangerous thoughts passed through that wretched woman's mind as she gazed, and once or twice her fingers worked uneasily, as if feverish and restless purposes were in her mind. The gloom and strange stillness without had perhaps added to her dark mood. Charles Henry might have been astonished at the fierce, intense hatred that gleamed in his victim's eyes, had he opened his own heavy lids at that moment.

But a change came over the scene. A sudden wind went sighing through the trees, herald of the coming tempest. A heavy burst of thunder broke the silence with prolonged reverberations, and the rain began to descend in torrents.

As the tempest deepened, other thoughts came to the stricken woman. The memory of the night, when that poor wanderer had found shelter in those very walls.

That snowy, stormy winter's night; the night Hilda was born; the night when Marian died.

Where was the fair girl now? The child of that unfortunate and guiltless one; the beloved and adopted protege of Philip Arden. If Avice was suffering, what was her fate? Young, beautiful, innocent, and all but penniless, Hilda was cast on the wide world. Not even a name belonged to her; not a friend, not a relative to make up for the lost heritage.

Avice tried to persuade herself that it was but right. She told herself that Hilda had no right to what she had been intended to receive; that Marian Halloway had forfeited all claim on Philip Arden by her perfidy; that Hilda was at once the child of an alien and the child of shame.

Why should she inherit the lands and wealth of Arden, while not a drop of Arden blood ran in her veins? Was it to be tolerated that the relative of Philip and Bessie was to be chased from the doors, while the base-born protege of a foolish and doting lover was to remain to reign there as mistress?

All these arguments had availed once. They were powerless now. Avice was under the voice of Him who speaks in the thunder and the earthquake; and that voice told her that she was guilty; deeply, hopelessly, stained with a double crime, the consequences of which she as yet could scarcely be aware.

The tempest deepened; lurid flashes of lightning alternated with the thick darkness, and still Charles Henry slept on; and still his wretched wife now trembled under the fearful tempest; now gazed on his features, and listened to his heavy breathing, with a loathing, a hatred that might have carried her to any pitch of desperation.

Then a new flash would strike her guilty soul into a sharper agony.

And the sudden feeling, "How dare I, the guilty one, take revenge on another?" would come over her feverish brain, and still its agonized beatings.

Then the flash and the thunder would alike die away; and the fierce, dark consciousness that the wretched, degraded man before her was the author of her misery, the instrument of her punishment, would drive her into fiercer despair.

"Charles," she cried; "Charles Henry!"

A dull snore was the only reply, and a bitter contempt curled her lip.

"Wretch!" she hissed, from between her closed teeth. "Is it for such as you that I have suffered and sinned?"

Again a terrible peal of thunder shook the whole mansion to its foundation, and Avice crept trembling and noiselessly from the room.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Fought and Won.

BY E. W. P. B.

IN a pretty bedchamber, in the equally pretty country-house known as Fairmeadow, a young girl of scarcely twenty was seated at her toilette table, her arm resting on it, and her hand supporting her head. She looked pale and anxious, and turned quickly, nervously, at the least sound, while a deep sigh escaped her lips on finding the sound not the one she desired.

At last, however, the expected footstep, awaited with such impatience and anxiety, came, and springing up, she hastened forward to meet a tall, handsome, dark-haired girl, about a year her senior, who at that moment entered.

"What did papa say?" she cried. "Oh, dear Rosa, how has the interview terminated?"

"Why, Minna dear, as we all imagined it would."

"Ah," said the young girl, in a tone of intense despair, as her head sunk on her cousin's shoulder, "I knew papa would never consent."

"Yes, we all knew it, Minna; Herbert himself knew it; but, for his sake, do not despair; he does not."

"What! can Herbert still hope?" exclaimed Minna, suddenly raising her head, while a bright gleam irradiated her features. "Then papa could not have absolutely refused him?"

"Well, as to that," replied her cousin, hesitatingly, as she gently drew Minna down to her side on a sofa, "I believe my uncle means it as an absolute and most decided refusal; yet for all that, Herbert hopes. When he spoke to your father he at once attacked Robert's birth, or rather his position, declaring it quite surpassed his comprehension that a farmer's son—a tiller of soil, could so presume as to ask his, Colonel Ogilvy's, daughter in marriage.

"No, he was proud to say he had other views for her than of passing her life rurallising among cattle and turnips.

"I was outside the window and saw the blood rush to Herbert's face, and he bit his lip fiercely."

Minna's tears fell too fast to admit of utterance. All happiness in this world seemed gone for ever. The blow was a severe one, truly.

"And have you not seen him, Rosa?" she at last asked. "Oh, happy girl, you are not prohibited!"

"Yes; I met him as he left the house, dear."

"Oh, in pity, tell me what he said—do not miss a syllable."

"His words were few, Minna, for he was greatly agitated. He said—Tell her that I shall never cease to love her, and will return to claim her.

"Whatever difficulties may arise, be assured I will overcome them.

"Only beg of her, Rosa, to be true to me!"

"I will, I will, indeed!" sobbed Minna.

Finally, with words of encouragement, hope, and love, Rosa succeeded, and made her retire to rest, and lay her aching head upon her pillow. Then Rosa, with a loving kiss, said, "Good-night," and added mentally, as she closed the door behind her, "Poor Minna!—poor Herbert! I thank Heaven uncle has no control over my yes or no!"

Weeks rolled away. The great world went on in its usual course. There was contention in the East. Russia had stretched its greedy grasp towards Turkey, and had been met by the iron grip of the blood-red hand of War.

Peace, however, had settled down on Fairmeadow, or rather apparent peace; for Minna, though seemingly resigned and quiet, hid beneath her outward composure a true and anxious heart, ever beating for that one from whom they had not once heard.

One morning, as Rosa passed the letters by that day's post across the breakfast table to her uncle, she fancied that the address of one was in Herbert's handwriting.

She cast a hurried glance towards Minna to see if she also had observed it; but she had not. Rosa eagerly watched the opening of that letter, and was confirmed in her surmise when she saw the Colonel, after a hasty perusal, quickly consign it to the fire. She felt a sudden impulse to spring up and rescue it, and would have done so, had not her aunt turned her thoughts by exclaiming, "Oh dear! here is a letter from Edward! His regiment is ordered to the Crimea, and he will be here to-day to bid us farewell.'"

It was only what was to be expected for their young soldier-boy, but there were tears in the mother's eyes, and the Colonel's voice was husky and tremulous.

The talk was now of Edward, their only son, brother, and cousin, and for a while the other letter—now a heap of white ashes, with little sparks appearing and disappearing, to watch which is one of the great delights of childhood—was forgotten.

* * * * * *

Months went slowly on, and brought sadness and death to many a household. Many family circles, both rich and poor, were broken, and among them stood the one vacant chair which had been gazed on in silence and in tears.

The war was still at its height, and the *Gazette* of nearly every evening had its list of killed and wounded.

There had been joy and gloom alternately at Fairmeadow, and once the latter seemed to have taken its place definitely at the once social hearth.

Edward Ogilvy had been reported missing after a severe engagement—dead, perhaps, in the enemy's lines, or wounded and a prisoner.

In this great family grief Minna almost forgot her own, and it appeared that the hand of misfortune would link the family at Fairmeadow once more firmly together.

Then came a welcome joyous letter from Edward himself.

He has indeed been left wounded on the field, and would certainly have been captured the next morning by the enemy, but for the brave daring of a fellow-officer, who was also wounded.

They were both now in the hospital, and, when sufficiently recovered, were to return to England on leave, which would bring Edward home by Christmas.

What cheerful faces now beamed at Fairmeadow! What beating, anxious hearts looked forward for that Christmas!

Poor Minna even tried to smile, and join as heartily as her cousin in the universal delight.

* * * * * * * *

And Christmas time was really here!

Yes, it came at last after the dreary waiting; and oh, what a happy Christmas it was to be! The mother's heart was full to overflowing with joy and goodwill to everybody; and the stiff and haughty colonel visits his country neighbors to talk about his boy, and contemplates giving a large entertainment the day after Christmas Day, in honor of that son—his brave young soldier—who could already boast of wounds gained in his country's honor.

The Nevilles were to be asked. Yes; he even consented to that. Herbert being absent—where, he did not know or care—they were asked, though not one at Fairmeadow thought for a moment that they would come.

The 22nd, the 23rd. Oh, how slowly the time went! The 24th—and he will be here in an hour.

The colonel paced the floor silently and—despite his endeavor to appear otherwise—impatiently.

Suddenly there was a movement of feet in the kitchen below. What could it mean? They came nearer.

It was a man's foot, treading softly. It was outside.

There was whispering. The colonel started up; while Rosa and the mother, anxiously expectant, trembled, and nervously clasped their hands.

The door flew open, and Edward Ogilvy, rushing in, was clasped in his parent's arms.

There was much embracing, much kissing (Rosa coming in for a full share,—perhaps over the above.) It would have done any heart good to have beheld that scene on that cheery happy Christmas Eve.

At last the young soldier, fairly exhausted sunk into a chair, and exclaimed, "Thank you! Such a welcome home is jolly indeed to one who thought never to behold that home again. But how selfish we are! Not one of you has thought to ask about my preserver, but for whom I might be stiff in a Russian grave, if they had deigned to give me one. The last you heard was that he had been dangerously wounded through saving me."

"But we trust he has recovered?" said the colonel, anxiously.

"He is a noble; it was a noble action. My son, you said he would return with you. Surely you have asked him here to receive a father's thanks? Fetch him to us at once."

"Only too glad shall I be to introduce my noble, generous young friend to you," rejoined her son. He hastened to the door, opened it, and brought in his friend, "Let me introduce to you, my dear father and mother," said Edward, "your son's preserver, Lieutenant Herbert Neville."

It was indeed so. There he stood, a manly, handsome young soldier with his wounded arm, however, still in a sling. The field he had chosen had been the colonel's own, and he had trodden it firmly, bravely, till he had risen to an equal rank with the colonel's son.

The colonel stood for a moment confused before the calm face of the young soldier, there to receive thanks, no longer to supplicate.

Minna had given a slight cry, and appeared about to rush forward, but Rosa restrained her.

All eyes were turned anxiously upon the

colonel. For an instant he remained irresolute; then, his better nature getting paramount, he advanced, and taking the lieutenant's hand said, "Herbert Neville, yours has been a noble retribution. Forgive me. Through me, your home might now have been desolate; while by your means, joy has been brought to ours. I sincerely ask you to forgive, and—forget. You have proved yourself true to your word, and a better man than I. My son's preserver, be also my son. Go, comfort Minna; she has been true to you, as her pale features can testify."

The next moment the young soldier held Minna clasped to his heart.

Need we go further? Who can doubt that it was a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all at Fairmeadow on that occasion.

Trooper Braxton.

BY A. C. D.

CHAPTER II.

THE main body kept about fifty yards behind the mounted men while a solitary horseman brought up the rear.

The ranger scanned them narrowly as they passed.

He seemed to recognize most of them.

Some were his natural enemies the troopers; the majority were miners who had volunteered to get rid of an evil which affected their interests so closely.

They were a fine bronzed set of men, with a deliberate air about them, as if they had come for a purpose and meant to attain it.

As the last rider passed before his hiding-place the solitary watcher started and growled a curse in his beard.

"I know his darned face," he said; "it's Bill Hanker, the man who got the drop on Long Nat Smeaton in Silver City in '53; what the thunder brought him here? I must be off by the back, though, and let the boys know."

So saying he picked up his gun, and with a scowl after the distant party he crouched down, and passed rapidly out of sight into the very thickest part of the bush.

* * * * * *

The expedition had started from Trafalgar on the afternoon of the same day that Maurice Broadhurst's horse, foam-flecked and frightened, had galloped up to the old stable-door.

Burton, the inspector of constabulary, an energetic and able man as all who know him can testify, was in command.

He had detached Braxton, the young Irishman, and Thompson, another trooper, as a vanguard.

He himself rode with the main body, grey-whiskered and lean, but as straight in the back as when he and I built a shanty in '39 in what is now Burke street, Melbourne.

With him were McGilvray, Foley, and Anson, of the Trafalgar force; Hartley, the sheep farmer; Murdock and Summerville, who had made their pile at the mines, and Dan Murphy, who was cleaned out when the clay of the "Orient" turned to gravel, and had been yearning for a solid square fight ever since.

Chicago Bill formed the rear-guard, and the whole party presented an appearance which, though far from military, was decidedly warlike.

They camped out that night seventeen miles from Trafalgar, and next day pushed on as far as where the Stirling road runs across.

The third morning brought them to the northern bank of the Wawirra, which they forded.

Here a council of war was held, for they were entering what they regarded as enemy's country.

The bush track, though wild, was occasionally traversed both by shepherds and sportsmen.

It would hardly be the home of a gang of desperate bushrangers.

But beyond the Wawirra the great rugged range of the Tapu mountains towered up to the clouds, and across a wild spur of these the mining track passed up to Bluemansdyke.

It was here they decided at the council that the scene of the late drama lay.

The question now was what means were to be taken to attack the murderers; for that murder had been done no man doubted.

All were of one mind as to what the main line of action should be.

To go for them straight, shoot as many as possible on sight, and hang the balance in Trafalgar; that was plain sailing.

But how to get at them was the subject of much debate.

The troopers were for pushing on at once, and trusting to Fortune to put the rangers in their way.

The miners proposed rather to gain some neighboring peak, from which a good view of the country could be obtained, and some idea gained of their whereabouts.

Chicago Bill took rather a gloomy view of things.

"Nary one will we see," said he; "they've dusted out of the district 'fore this. They'd know the horse would go home, and likely as not they've had a watch on the road to warn them. I guess, boys, we'd best move on an' do our best."

There was some discussion, but Chicago's opinion carried the day, and the expedition pushed on in a body.

After passing the second upland station the scenery becomes more and more grand and rugged. Great peaks two and three thousand feet high rose sheer up at each side of the narrow track.

The heavy wind and rain of the storm had brought down much debris, and the road was almost impassible in places. They were frequently compelled to dismount and to lead the horses.

"We haven't far now, boys," said the inspector cheerily, as they struggled on; and he pointed to a great dark cleft which yawned in front of them between two almost perpendicular cliffs.

"They are there," he said, 'or nowhere.' A little higher the road became better and their progress was not rapid. A halt was called, guns were unslung, and their pistols loosened in their belts, for the great gully of Bluemansdyke—the wildest part of the whole Tapu range was gaping before them. But not a thing was to be seen; all was as still as the grave.

The horses were picketed in a quiet little ravine, and the whole party crept on on foot. The Southern sun glared down hot and clear on the yellow bracken and banks of fern which lined the narrow winding track. Still, not a sign of life.

Then came a clear low whistle from the two advanced troopers, announcing that something had been discovered, and the main body hurried up. It was a spot for deeds of blood. On one side of the road there lowered a black gnarled precipice, on the other was the sullen mouth of the rugged gully.

The road took a sharp turn at this spot. Just at the angle several large boulders were scattered, lining and overlooking the track. It was at this angle that a little bed of mud and trampled red clay betokened a recent struggle. There could be no question that they were at the scene of the murder of the two young miners.

The outline of a horse could still be seen in the soft ground, and the prints of its hoofs as it kicked out in its death-agony were plainly marked.

Behind one of the rocks were the tracks of several feet, and some pistol-wadding was found in a tuft of ferns.

The whole tragedy lay unclosed before them. Two men, careless in the pride of their youth and their strength, had swept round that fatal curve. Then a crash, a groan, a brutal laugh, the galloping of a frightened horse, and all was over.

What was to be done now? The rocks around were explored, but nothing fresh discovered.

Some six days had elapsed, and the birds were apparently flown. The party separated and hunted about among the boulders. Then the American, who could follow a trial like a bloodhound, found tracks leading towards a rugged pile of rocks on the north side of the gully. In a crevice here the remains of three horses were found. Close to them the rim of an old straw hat projected through the loose loam. Hartley, the sheep-farmer, sprang over to pick it up; he started back in the act of stooping, and said in an awestruck whisper to his friend Murphy, "There's a head under it, Dan!" A few strokes of a spade disclosed a face familiar to most of the group—that of a poor travelling photographer well known in the colony by the *sobriquet* of "Stooping Johnny," who had disappeared some time before. It was now in an advanced stage of putrefaction. Close to him another body was discovered, and another beside that. In all thirteen victims of these English Thugs were lying under the shadow of the great north wall of the Bluemansdyke gully. It was there, standing in silent awe round the remains of these poor fellows, hurried into eternity and buried like dogs, that the search-party registered a vow to sacrifice all interests and comforts for the space of one month to a single consideration of revenge.

The inspector uncovered his grizzled head as he solemnly swore it, and his comrades followed his example. The bodies were then with a brief prayer consigned to a deeper grave, a rough cairn was erected over them, and the eleven men set forth upon their mission of stern justice.

Three weeks had passed—three weeks and two days. The sun was sinking over the great waste of bushland, unexplored and unknown, which stretches away from the eastern slope of the Tapu mountains.

Save some eccentric sportsman or bold prospector, no colonist had ever ventured into that desolate land; yet on this autumn evening two men were standing in a little glade in the very heart of it. They were engaged tying up their horses and apparently making preparations for camping out for the night. Though haggard, unkempt, and worn, one still might recognise two of our former acquaintances—the young Irish trooper, and the American, Chicago Bill.

This was the last effort of the avenging party.

They had traversed the mountain gorges, they had explored every gully and ravine, and now they had split into several small bands, and, having named a trysting-place, they were scouring the country in the hope of hitting upon some trace of the murderers. Foley and Anson had remained among the hills, Murdoch and Dan Murphy were exploring towards Bathurst, Summerville and the inspector had ascended along the Wawirra, while the others in three parties were wandering through the eastern bushland.

Both the trooper and the miner seemed dejected and weary. The one had set out with visions of glory, and hopes of a short cut to the coveted stripes which would put him above his fellows; the other had obeyed a rough wild sense of justice; and each was alike disappointed. The horses were picketed, and the men threw themselves heavily upon the ground.

There was no need to light a fire; a few dampers and some rusty bacon were their whole provisions.

Braxton produced them, and handed his share to his comrade. They ate their rough meal without a word. Braxton was the first to break the silence.

"We're playing our last card," he said.

"And a darned poor one at that," replied his comrade.

"Why, mate," he continued, "if we did knock up agin these gallfired varmin, ye don't suppose you and I would go for them? I guess I'd up an' shove for Trafalgar first."

Braxton smiled. Chicago's reckless courage was too well known in the colony for any words of his to throw a doubt upon it. Miners still tell how, during the first great rush in '52, a blustering ruffian, relying upon some similar remark of the pioneer's, had tried to establish a reputation by an unprovoked assault upon him; and the narrators then glide imperceptibly into an account of Bill's handsome conduct towards the widow—how he had given her his week's clean-up to start her in a drinking shanty.

Braxton thought of this as he smiled at Chicago's remarks, and glanced at the massive limbs and weather-beaten face.

"We'd best see where we are before it grows darker," he said; and rising he staked his gun against the trunk of a blue gum-tree, and, seizing some of the creepers which hung down from it, began rapidly and silently to ascend it.

"His soul's too big for for his body," growled the American, as he watched the dark lithe figure standing out against the pale-blue evening sky.

"What d'ye see Jack?" he shouted; for the trooper had reached the topmost branch by this time, and was taking a survey of the country.

"Bush, bush; nothing but bush," said the voice among the leaves. "Wait a bit, though there's a kind of hill about three miles off away to the nor'-east.

"I see it above the mass of trees right over there. Not much good tous, though, he continued, after a pause, "for it seems a barren stony sort of a place."

Chicago paced about at the bottom of the tree.

"He seems an mighty long time prospectin' it," he muttered, after ten minutes had elapsed. "Ah, here he is!" and the trooper came swinging down and landed panting just in front of him.

"Why, what's come over him? What's the matter, Jack?"

Something was the matter. That was very evident. There was a light in Braxton's blue eyes, and a flush on the pale cheek.

"Bill," he said, putting his hand on his comrade's shoulder, "it's about time you made tracks for the settlements."

"What d'ye mean?" said Chicago.

"Why, I mean that the murderers are within a league of us, and that I intend going for them. There, don't be huffed, old man," he added; "of course I knew you're only joking. But they are there, Bill; I saw smoke on the top of that hill, and it wasn't good honest smoke mind, you; it was dry-wood smoke, and meant to be hid. I thought it was mist at first; but no, it was smoke.

"It could only be them; who else would camp on the summit of a desolate hill? We've got them, Bill; we have them as sure as Fate."

"Or they're got us," growled the American. "But here, lad, here's my glass; run up and have a look at them."

"It's too dark now," said Braxton; "we'll camp out to-night. No fear of them stirring. They're lying by there until the whole thing blows over, depend upon it; so we'll make sure of them in the morning."

The miner looked plaintively up at the tree, and then down at his fourteen stone of solid muscle.

"I guess I must take your word for it," he grumbled; "but you are bushman enough to tell smoke from mist, and a dry-wood fire from an open one. We can't do anything to-night till we feel our way, so I allow we'd best water the horses an' have a good night's rest."

Braxton seemed to be of the same mind; so after a few minutes' preparation the two men wrapped themselves in their cloaks, and lay, two little dark spots, on the great green carpet of the primeval bush.

With the first gray light of dawn, Chicago sat up and roused his comrade.

A heavy mist hung over the bushland. They could hardly see the loom of the trees across the little glade.

Their clothes glistened with the little shining beads of moisture. They brushed each other down, and squatted in bush fashion over their rough breakfast.

The haze seemed to be lifting a little now; they could see fifty yards in every direction. The miner paced up and down in silence, ruminating over a plug of "Barrett's twist." Braxton sat on a fallen tree sponging and oiling his revolver.

Suddenly a single beam of sunshine played over the great blue gum. It widened and spread, and then in a moment the mist melted away, and the yellow leaves glowed like flakes of copper in the glare of the morning sun.

Braxton cheerily snapped the lock of the pistol, loaded it, and replaced it in his belt. Chicago began to whistle, and stopped in the middle of his walk.

"Now, young un," he said, "here's the glass."

Braxton slung it round his neck, and ascended the tree as he had done the night before.

It was child's play to the trooper—a splendid climber, as I can testify; for I saw him two years later swarming up the topmost backstay of the Hector frigate in a gale of wind for a bet of a bottle of wine.

He soon reached the summit, and shuffling along a naked branch two hundred feet from the ground, he gained a point where no leaves could obstruct his view.

Here he sat straddle-legged; and, unslinging the glass, he proceeded to examine the hill, bush by bush and stone by stone.

An hour passed without his moving. Another had almost elapsed before he descended. His face was grave and thoughtful.

"Are they there" was the eager query.

"Yes; they are there."

"How many?"

"I've only seen five; but there may be more. Wait till I think it out, Bill."

The miner gazed at him with all the reverence matter has towards mind. Thinking things out was not his strong point.

"Blamed if I can help you," he said apologetically. "It kinder don't come nat'ral to me to be plottin' and plannin'. Want o' eddication, likely. My father was allowed to be the hardest-headed man in the states. Judge Jeffers let on as how the old man wanted to hand in his checks; so he down an' put his head on the line when the first engine as ran from Vermont was comin' up. They fined him a hundred dollars for upsettin' that 'ere locomotive, an' the old man got the cussedest headache as ever was."

Braxton hardly seemed to hear this family anecdote; he was deep in thought.

"Look here, old man," said he, "sit down by me on the trunk and listen to what I say.

"Remember that you are here as a volunteer, Bill—you've no call to come; now, I am here in the course of duty.

"Your name is known through the settlement; you were a marked man when I was in the nursery. Now, Bill, it's a big thing I am going to ask you. If you and I go in and take these men, it will be another feather in your cap, and in yours only. What do men know of Jack Braxton, the private of police? He'd hardly be mentioned in the matter. Now, I want to make my name this day.

"We'll have to secure these men by a surprise after dusk, and it will be easy for one resolute man to do it as for two; perhaps easier, for there is less chance of detection. Bill, I want you to stay with the horses, and let me go alone."

Chicago sprang to his feet with a snarl of indignation, and paced up and down in front of the fallen trees. Then he seemed to master himself, for he sat down again.

"They'd chaw you up, lad," he said, putting his hand on Braxton's shoulder. "It wouldn't wash."

"Not they," said the trooper. "I'd take your pistol as well as my own, and I'd need a deal of chawing."

"My character would be ruined," said Bill.

"It's beyond the reach of calumny. You can afford to give me one fair chance."

Bill buried his face in his hands, and thought a little.

"Well, lad," he said, looking up, "I'll look after the horses."

Braxton wrung him by the hand.

"There are few men who would have done it, Bill; you are a friend worth having. Now, we'll spend our day as best we can, old man, and lie close till evening; for I won't start for an hour after dusk; so we have plenty of time on our hands."

The day passed slowly. The trooper lay among the mosses below the great blue gum in earnest thought.

Once or twice he imagined he heard the subterranean chuckle and slap of the thigh which occasionally denoted amusement on the part of the miner; but on glancing up at that individual, the expression of his face was so solemn, not to say funereal, that it was evidently an illusion.

They partook of their scanty dinner and supper cheerfully and with hearty appetites. The former listlessness had given place to briskness and activity now that their object was in view.

Chicago blossomed into many strange experiences and racy reminiscences of Western life. The hours passed rapidly and cheerily.

The trooper produced a venerable pack of cards from his holster and proposed euchre; but their gregariousness, and the general difficulty of distinguishing the king of clubs from the ace of hearts, exercised a depressing influence upon the players.

Gradually the sun went down on the great wilderness. The shadow fell on the little glade, while the distant hill was still tipped with gold; then that too became purplish, a star twinkled over the Tapu range, and night crept over the scene.

"Good-bye, old man," said Braxton. "I won't take my carbine; it would only be in the way. I can't thank you enough for letting me have this chance. If they wipe me out Bill, you'll not lose sight of them, I know; and you'll say I died like a man.

"I've got no friends and no message, and nothing in the world but this pack of cards. Keep them, Bill; they were a fine pack in '51.

"If you see a smoke on the hill in the morning you'll know all's well, and you'll bring up the horses at once.

"If you don't you'll ride to Fallen Pine, where we were to meet,—ride day and night, Bill,—tell Inspector Burton that you know where the rangers are, that Private Braxton is dead, and that he said to bring up his men, else he'd come back from the grave and lead them up himself. Do that, Bill. good-bye."

A great quiet rested over the heart of that desolate woodland. The croak of a frog, the gurgle of a little streamlet half hidden in the long grass—no other sound. Then a wakeful jay gave a shrill chatter, another joined, and another; a bluefinch screamed; a wombat rushed past to gain its burrow.

Something had disturbed them; yet all was apparently as peaceful as before.

Had you been by the jay's nest, however, and peered downwards, you would have seen something gliding like a serpent through the brushwood, and caught a glimpse, perhaps, of a pale resolute face, and the glint of a pocket-compass pointing north by east.

It was a long and a weary night for Trooper Braxton. Any moment he might come on an outpost of the rangers, so every step had to be taken slowly and with care. But he was an experienced woodman, and hardly a twig snapped as he crawled along. A morass barred his progress, and he was compelled to make a long detour. Then he found himself in thick brushwood, and once more had to go out of his way

It was very dark here in the depth of the forest. There was a heavy smell, and a dense stream laden with miasma rose from the ground.

In the dim light he saw strange creeping things around him. A bushmaster writhed across the path in front of him, a cold dank lizard crawled over his hand as he crouched down, but the trooper thought only of the human reptiles in front, and made steadily for his goal.

Once he seemed to be pursued by some animal; he heard a creaking behind him, but it ceased when he stopped and listened, so he continued his way.

It was when he reached the base of the hill which he had seen from the distance that the real difficulty of his undertaking began.

It was almost conical in shape, and very steep.

The sides were covered with loose stones and an occasional large boulder.

One false step here would send a shower of these tell-tale fragments clattering down the hill.

The trooper stripped off his high leather boots and turned up his trousers; then he began cautiously to climb, cowering down behind every boulder.

There was a little pitch of light far away on the horizon, a very little gray patch, but it caused the figure of a man who was moving upon the crest of the hill to loom out dim and large.

He was a sentry apparently, for he carried a gun under his arm.

The top of the hill was formed by a little plateau about a hundred yards in circumference.

Along the edge of this the man was pacing, occasionally stopping to peer down into the great dusky sea beneath him.

From this raised edge the plateau curved down from every side, so as to form a crater-like depression.

In the centre of this hollow stood a large white tent. Several horses were picketed around it, and the ground was littered with bundles of dried grass and harness.

You could see these details now from the edge of the plateau, for the gray patch in the east had become white, and was getting longer and wider.

You could see the sentry's face, too, as he paced round and round.

A handsome weak-minded face, with more of the fool than the devil impressed on it.

He seemed cheerful, for the birds were beginning to sing, and their thousand voices rose from the bush below.

He forgot the forged note, I think, and the dreary voyage, and the wild escape, and the dark gully away beyond the Tapu range, for his eyes glistened, and he hummed a quaint little Yorkshire country air.

He was back again in the West Riding village, and the rough boulder in front shaped itself into the hill behind which Nelly lived before he broke her heart, and he saw the ivied church that crowned it.

He would have seen something else had he looked again, something which was not in his picture: a white passionless face which glared at him over the boulder, as he turned upon his heel, still singing, and unconscious that the bloodhounds of justice were close at his heels.

The trooper's time for action had come.

He had reached the last boulder; nothing lay between the plateau and himself but a few loose stones.

He could hear the song of the sentry dying away in the distance; he drew his regulation sword, and with his Adams in his left he rose and sprang like a tiger over the ridge and down into the hollow.

The sentry was startled from his dream of the past by a clatter and a rattling of stones.

He sprang round and cocked his gun.

No wonder that he gasped, and that a change passed over his bronzed face.

A painter would need a dash of ultramarine in his flesh tints to represent it now.

No wonder, for that dark active figure with the bare feet and brass buttons meant disgrace and the gallows to him.

He saw him spring across to the tent; he saw the gleam of a sword, and heard a crash as the tent pole was severed, and the canvas came down with a crash upon the heads of the sleepers.

And then, above oaths and shouts he heard a mellow Irish voice:

"I've twelve shots in my hands. I have ye, every mother's son. Up with your arms! up, I say, before there's blood upon my soul. One move, and ye stand before the throne."

Braxton had stooped and parted the doorway of the fallen tent, and was now standing over six ruffians who occupied it.

They lay as they had wakened, but with their hands above their heads, for there was no resisting that quiet voice, backed up by the two black muzzles.

They imagined they were surrounded and hopelessly outmatched.

Not one of them dreamed that the whole attacking force stood before them.

It was the sentry who first began to realize the true state of the case.

There was no sound or sign of any reinforcement.

He looked to see that the cap was pressed well down on the nipple, and crept towards the tent.

He was a good shot, as many a gamekeeper on Braidagarth and the Yorkshire fells could testify.

He raised his gun to his shoulder.

Braxton heard the click, but dared not remove his eye or his weapon from his six prisoners.

The sentry looked along the sights.

He knew his life depended upon that shot.

There was more of the devil than the fool in his face now.

He paused for a moment to make sure of his aim, and then came a crash and the thud of a falling body.

Braxton was still standing over the prisoners, but the sentry's gun was unfired, and he himself was writhing on the ground with a bullet through his lungs.

"Ye see," said Chicago, as he rose from behind a rock with his gun still smoking in his hand, "it seemed a powerful mean thing to leave you, Jack; so I thought as I'd kinder drop around promiscus, and wade in if needed, which I was, as you can't deny. No, ye don't," he added, as the sentry stretched out his hand to grasp his fallen gun; "leave the wepin alone, young man; it ain't in your way as it lies there."

"I'm a dead man!" groaned the ranger.

"Then lie quiet like a respectable corpse," said the miner, "an' don't go a-squirmin' towards yer gun. That's uneddicated conduct."

"Come here, Bill," cried Braxton, "and bring the ropes those horses are picketed with. Now," he continued, as the American, having abstracted the sentry's gun, appeared with an armful of ropes, "you tie those fellows up, and I'll kill any man who moves."

"A pleasant division of labor, eh, old Blatherskite," said Chicago, playfully tapping the one-eyed villain Maloney on the head. "Come on; the ugliest first!"

So saying, he began upon him and fastened him securely.

One after another the rangers were tied up; all except the wounded man, who was too helpless to need securing.

Then Chicago went down and brought up the horses, while Braxton remained on guard; and by midday the cavalcade was in full march through the forest en route for Fallen Pine, the rendezvous of the search-party.

The wounded man was tied on to a horse in front, the other rangers followed on foot for safety, while the trooper and Chicago brought up the rear.

* * *

There was a sad assemblage at the Fallen Pine.

One by one they had dropped in, tanned with the sun, torn by briers, weakened by the poisonous miasma of the marshlands, all with the same tale of privation and failure.

Summerville and the inspector had fallen in with blacks above the upper ford, and had barely escaped with their lives.

Troopers Foley and Anson were well, though somewhat gaunt from privation.

Hartley had lost his horse from the bite of a bushmaster.

Murdoch and Murphy had scoured the bush as far as Bathurst, but without success.

All were dejected and weary.

They only waited the arrival of two of their number to set out on their return to Trafalgar.

It was midday, and the sun was beating down with a pitiless glare on the little clearing.

The men were lying about on the shady side of the trunks, some smoking, some with their hats over their faces, and half-asleep.

The horses were tethered here and there, looking as listless as their masters.

Only the inspector's old charger seemed superior to the weather—a shrewd, intelligent old horse, that had seen the world, and was nearly as deeply versed in woodcraft as his master.

As Chicago said, "Short of climbin' a tree, there weren't nothin' that horse couldn't do; an' it would make a darned good try at that if it was pushed."

Old "Sawback" seemed ill at ease this afternoon.

Twice he had pricked up his ears, and once he had raised his head as if to neigh, but paused before committing.

The inspector looked at him curiously and put his meerschaum back into its case.

Meerschaums were always a weakness of poor Jim Burton's.

"Hang it, sir," I have heard him say, "a gentleman is known by his pipe. When he comes down in the world his pipe has most vitality."

He put the case inside his uniform and went over to the horse.

The ears were still twitching.

"He hears something," said the inspector. "By Jove, so do I! Here, boys, jump up; there's a body of men coming!"

Every man sprang to his horse's head.

"I hear hoofs, and I hear the tramp of men on foot," continued Burton. "They must be a large party. They're heading straight for us. Get under cover, boys, and have your guns loose."

The men wheeled right and left, and in a very few moments the glade was deserted.

Only the brown barrel of a gun here and there among the long grass and the ferns showed where they were crouching.

"Steady, boys!" said Burton; "if they are enemies, don't fire till I give the word. Then one by one aim low, and let the smoke clear. Rangers, by Jove!" he added, as a horseman broke into the clearing some way down, with his head hanging over his horse's neck. "More," he growled, as several men emerged from the bush at the same point. "By the living powers, they are taken! I see the ropes. Hurrah!"

And next moment Braxton and Chicago were mobbed by nine shouting, dancing men, who pulled them and tugged at them and slapped them on the back, and dragged them about in such way, that Maloney whispered with a scowl:

"If we'd had the grit to do as much, we'd have been free men this day!"

And now our story is nearly done.

We have chronicled a fact which we think is worthy of a wider circulation than the colonial drinking-bar and the sheep-farmer's fireside, for Trooper Braxton and his capture of the Bluemansdyke murderers have long been household words among our brothers in the England of the Southern seas.

We need not detail that joyful ride to Trafalgar, nor the welcome, nor the attempt at lynching; nor how Maloney, the arch criminal, turned Queen's evidence, and so writhed away from the gallows. All that may be read in the colonial press, more graphically than I can tell it. My friend Jack Braxton is an officer now, as his father was before him, and still in the Trafalgar force. Bill I saw last in '61, when he came over to London in charge of the bark of the Wellingtonia for the International Exhibition. He is laying on flesh, I fear, since he took to sheep-farming; for he was barely brought up by seventeen stone, and his fighting weight used to be fourteen; but he looks well and hearty. Maloney was lynched in Placerville—at least so I heard. I had a letter last mail from the old inspector; he has left the police, and has a farm at Bathurst. I think, stout-hearted as he is, he must give a little bit of a shudder when he rides down to Trafalgar for the Thursday market, and comes round that sharp turn of the road where the boulders lie, and the furze looks looks so yellow against the red clay.

[THE END.]

Art and the Lion.—If any ambitious artist would like to secure fame, he would do well to ponder on an anecdote which has recently been told of a plucky painter. It is said that while the celebrated Martin, the lion-tamer, was staying at Ghent in 1825, he noticed among the most constant attendants at his menagerie a young man who, by reason of the drawing materials he brought with him and freely employed, stood confessed an artist. Martin introduced himself and the two became intimate friends. One day the enthusiastic artist, while taking the portrait of a noble lion called Nero, complained bitterly that the bars of the cage were in the way. "Don't let that be any obstacle," said the tamer, sympathizingly. "If you will come with me into Nero's 'apartment,' and allow me to introduce you I can answer for it that he will show how flattered he is by a visit from so excellent an artist, and will give you every facility for handing down his features to prosterity." The artist, strange to say, jumped at the offer; and Martin, who was not the man to lose an opportunity of advertising himself, sent word to the Duke Saxe-Weimar, Governor of Ghent, and to other notabilities, that he would on a given day go into Nero's cage, and take an amateur foreigner with him. The Duke did not fail to put in an appearance, the plucky pair walked into the cage, and Nero was at first inclined to be what is called "nasty." But, reassured by his master's voice, the lion went and lay down in a corner; and the painter, sitting down opposite, coolly proceeded to—cut his pencil. Having performed this little preliminary to his satisfaction, he executed a sketch of Nero, which was pronounced to be very like. The tamer and the young painter then took a polite leave of the lion; and the Duke, having complimented the artist on the pluck as well as talent displayed, would fain have purchased the sketch. But it was not to be had for money, and the artist kept it himself. This was Verboeckhoven, afterwards famous as a Belgian animal painter. How much of his success he owed to his daring feat there is no telling, but it very likely gave him the start which talent requires; and yet, adds the narrator of the anecdote, one would hardly like to whisper to the young aspirant of to-day, "Go thou and do likewise."

Phonetic Spelling.—The following specimens of English orthography suggest the variety we may have when phonetic spelling becomes general. The figures in parentheses give the date when the forms are found; 1—eleventh century; 2—twelfth century, and so on: *Alms*—Ælmesse, elmysse, (1-3;) almisse, almisse, (2-3;) almisse, almesse, (2-3;) almesse, (2-6;) elmes, (2;) almes, (2-7;) almys, (3;) almesse, almis, almesse, (4;) almus, (4-5;) elmys, almwa, (5;) almouse, almose, (5-6) almous, (5-7;) awmous, (8-9;) allmes, almoyse, almoise, almos; (6;) alms, (6-9.) *Anvil*—Anefelt, anuelt, anaylt, anfelde, anefeld, anfeeld, anvelet, (4;) anfeld, (4-6;) anenelt, anaylt, anduell, anuelt, andfelde, (5;) anuilde, hanfeld, andulle, and vile, anuile, (6;) anvil, (6-9;) anvill, anfeeld, anvile, anvild, anuielde, anvelde, (7.)

Crossing Knives and Forks.—A great many people cross their knives and forks without knowing what it signifies. Of old this was used as the sign of the Cross.

When Mind and Body are Out of Sorts, with cold extremities, a yellowness in the skin, costiveness, dull headache, and an indisposition to stir about, be sure you are in for a Bilious Attack, springing from a more or less Disordered Liver. Dr. Jayne's Sanative Pills will bring the Liver to a healthy condition, and speedily remove all biliary distress.

Scientific and Useful

Firing Through Glass.—It is a curious fact that a ball fired through glass may make a hole enough smaller that the full size of a ball before firing to prevent an unfired ball of the same calibre from passing through.

Electric Signal.—An electric signal apparatus on a French railway causes the blowing of a steam whistle upon a locomotive approaching danger signal. The engineer is thus warned. This apparatus is found valuable in fogs and snow-storms, when ordinary signals often escape notice.

Electric Locomotives.—It is expected that the municipal commission appointed by the authorities of Paris to report on the practicability of electricity as a motor for passenger trains in cities will recommend the experiment of an elevated railroad with electric locomotives in some part of the French capital.

Artificial Stone. A new compound for artificial building-stone has been produced. They mix pulverized cork, clay, lime, water-glass solution, and hair together, force the mass into moulds, and dry it by heat. The result is a stone of extreme lightness, non-absorbent of moisture, and not subject to decomposition. Where clay is not at hand, it can be replaced by dry earth, volcanic tufa, or cement.

Sleeplessness.—When sleeplessness is caused by grief it is said that morphia, narcein, and codein prove very efficient remedies; but when it arises from nervousness or arterial excitement, bromide of potassium acts well unless the patient is anæmic. In purely nervous sleeplessness chloroform in small quantities answers well. Hydrate of chloral suits in all cases except in dyspepsia and heart disease. The sleeplessness of the aged and of persons with debilitated constitutions should be treated with such tonics as wine, bitters, and the like.

Secondary Batteries. — An English electrician has been working a sewing-machine with a secondary battery and has become enthusiastic regarding the feature of that source of stored energy. In a recent address he held that it is only a question of time when the secondary battery will be generally employed for traction purposes. He made a calculation showing that the cost of propelling a street car by a battery is one third less than if the same work were done by horses, and he did not take into consideration the $200 of capital sunk in the purchase of each horse.

Farm and Garden.

To Keep Cut Flowers.—A flower is precious at any time, but a spray of heliotrope or a rose bud in winter is doubly so, especially when presented by a friend. These and other tender things sometimes droop when first cut, and need to be shut away from air and light, with dampness confined about them, and after will much better endure exposure in dry and heated rooms. Lay them when first cut in a bowl or on a marble slab, with a wet towel over them on the shelf of a little cupboard with a wet cloth hung before it.

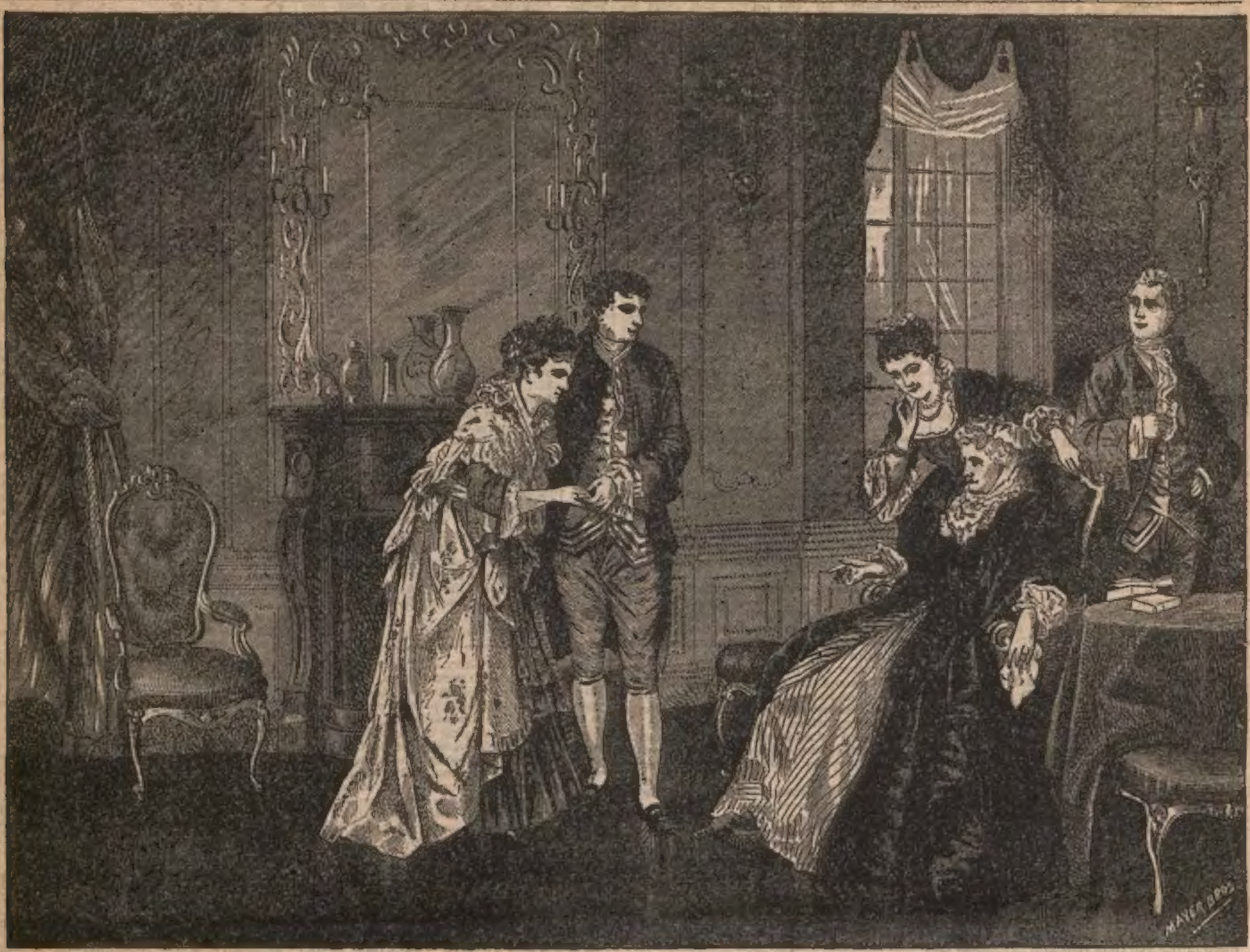
Keeping Poultry.—It is said that three bushels of meal will keep eight hens and one hundred young chicks the first month; four bushels of meal will keep them the second month, and five bushels will keep them the third month, or until the chickens are of good frying size, and are in good condition for the table, and will sell at almost any railroad town for $3.50 per dozen at any time during the summer or fall, and during the spring and early summer, before there are many spring chickens in the market, good ones, such as these, often sell for a much higher price.

Hills in an Acre.—The following table will show the number of hills contained in an acre of ground at certain distances:

1 foot apart each way	43,560
2 feet apart each way	10,890
3 feet apart each way	4,840
4 feet apart each way	2,722
5 feet apart each way	1,740
6 feet apart each way	1,210
9 feet apart each way	537
10 feet apart each way	435
12 feet apart each way	302
15 feet apart each way	193
20 feet apart each way	108
30 feet apart each way	69
45 feet apart each way	27

Dogs.—To remove fleas and lice on dogs, mix soft-soap with as much carbonate of soda as will make it into a thick paste. Then rub this well into the roots of the hair all over the dog's body, adding a little hot water as you go along, so as to enable you to completely saturate the skin with it. Let it remain for half an hour, then put the dog into a tub with warm water for ten minutes, letting him quietly soak, and now and then ducking his head under. Lastly, wash the soap completely out, and let him dry by exercise in the sun, choosing a warm day for the opperation. This, after two or three repetitions, will completely cleanse the foulest skin. To prevent vermin from again accumulating, moisten the hair once a week with a teaspoonful of carbolic acid to a half pint of water. Keep his house or resting place and bedding clean and sweet, and sprinkle it occasionly with the last mentioned solution.

One of the ablest professors at Yale College became nearly insane from want of sleep. He says: "What saved me from a horrible fate, was Dr. Benson's Celery and Chamomile Pills. They cured my neuralgia and I gained twenty three pounds in four weeks.



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726 Sansom St., Phila., Pa.

SATURDAY EVENING, DEC. 31, 1881.

CHRISTMAS.

Once more the glorious season of Christmas is at hand. The glad time of loving, of thoughtfulness, of charity, of kindness and all that is best in human nature, knocks at the door of the heart for entrance. And it is something that raises our kind above its usual self, to know there are but few bosoms where the knocking will not be gladly heard.

The holy influence of the season is strange and yet not strange. It is strange in so far that the currents generally frozen, or at least slow in their flow, should grow into the bursting floods we see them. It is strange that the souls coldly calculating their own benefit and pleasure erewhile, should glow and become warm with a touch of Heaven's fire, though only, too often it is true, to see it again relapse into the dead ashes of selfishness. But it is neither wonderful nor strange that the sense of a common humanity, a common origin and a common destiny, should prevail when all that is most blessed in the religion of Christianity, calls for recognition from its children.

In the universal entering into the spirit of the season, in its general observation may be seen not only the realization of the present, but the promise of the future. We may see that, no matter how far we drift asunder in many things, there is a golden bond that holds us together and leads up to Heaven. For it is in either outspoken or tacit acknowledgement of its blessings that all try to reciprocate the mercies granted them by doing good and bringing it to others. And as two thousand years ago the beacon of the world's redemption shone out for man, Christmas and its glories prove that tho' wandering far off in the breakers, there is joy in again turning—as now—our eyes toward the light.

It is always pleasant to note that in spite of what cynics and misanthropes have spoken, there is something innately good in man. It may be hidden or masked, or imprisoned, but the magic wand held by the Christmas spirit seldom fails to bring it to the day.

The ice of greed, of carelessness, of avarice even, melts before the sunlight of the season, and is reflected, sending joy and comfort into gloomy corners and shadowed spots all unused to such golden beams. May it ever be so. Everyone needs as much kindness as the world can afford, so even the humblest deed done in the name and spirit of Christmas shall not be without its reward.

PRESENTING THE BRIDE.

The only son, the family joy and pride,
Brings home his wife—his lately chosen bride—
An humble maid—but rich in Nature's grace—
And leads her 'fore his lady mother's face.

And she, it chanced, as mothers will, had planned
That he should choose one high-born in the land—
But still half lifts her head to greet the one
Who, fair and sweet, had won her darling son.

Her face breathes out affection, from the eyes
A glance of love towards the maiden flies—
The lips break in a well-pleased smile and part
To speak the welcome in her mother-heart.

His loving sister stands there near the mother's place
And anxious scans the changes of her face;
Young, loving, true, her woman's ardent voice
Had long approved her brother's love and choice.

Bent down she reads, with rapture and surprise
The pleasant story in her mother's eyes;
And feels that her new sister need not fear
A mother's blessing and true welcome here.

Displeased the son chose not as they marked out,
The stately father, halting, turns about,
But looks with thoughtful gaze upon the one—
The pretty, modest girl beside his son.

And all seems well. The simple story's told;
Again, that love outweighs both birth and gold.
And well the handsome son may look with pride
Upon his heart's queen, she, his lowly bride.

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OLD FRIENDS.

BY RITA.

We long to hear the voices clear
That sang to us Love's tender songs;
The old familiar faces still
Are they to whom our hearts belong.

From Childhood's home afar we roam,
Yet bear mem'ry fondly shrined;
Through busy days and crowded ways
We dream of those we left behind.

Ah, still we dream, and plan and scheme
The glad return, the welcome sweet,
When labor past, we shall at last
Be free those loving souls to greet:

But some return with grief to learn
Of Death and change and distance wide;
The old familiar faces will
No longer grace the home-fireside.

For one by one their tasks are done
Who shared with us Youth's happy years;
And then how cold, how blank and old,
How lifeless all the world appears!

Our heart beats low as on we go,
And all seems drear and desolate,
Till we shall come where, safe at home,
Some "old familiar faces" wait.

A Woman's Faith.

BY THEO. GIFT.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE following days were days of great unhappiness to Letitia and Mrs. Bushe. Sir George, perhaps embittered by his disappointment in Crosby, became quite unbearably tyrannical.

He went so far as to vow that before he went back to town Letitia should be married to Humphrey Barrett.

Letitia, losing something of her brave spirit since Crosby had disappeared and nothing more was heard of him, spent most of her time in tears, which did not soften Sir George at all, and spoiled her eyes and complexion sadly.

About three weeks had passed in this disagreeable way, and Letitia was getting tired of crying, and beginning to wonder whether Crosby had forgotten her, when one evening things came to a crisis.

The weather had changed and grown warmer; the snow had all melted away by degrees, and everything was enjoying itself under the soft blue sky and sunlight; there was a sweet smell of spring in the wind that blew freshly across the green meadows and lanes.

Mrs. Barrett and her daughters took advantage of this fine weather to walk down one day in thick boots and warm shawls from the Castle, and pay a visit to Letitia. The young lady appeared, after a good deal of persuasion from Mrs. Bushe, and even her stony heart was melted a little by their extreme friendliness.

The girls looked so simple and good; Mrs. Barrett talked in a sensible downright kindly way, and did not mention Humphrey's name.

Letitia was obliged to be polite, for, after all, Mrs. Barrett's dance was a pleasant recollection; her spirits were elastic, and she was a little tired and even ashamed of crying so much.

When they went away, however, Mrs. Barrett lost her advantage by kissing Letitia, and saying with oppressive motherliness, "My dear, we are very happy. We are all so fond of you."

Letitia did not quite see the meaning of this, for it had never entered into her head, whatever her father might say, that she was to marry Humphrey whether she liked it or not.

She thought Mrs. Barrett was a stupid woman, but submitted to be kissed in silence. The girls seemed half inclined to follow their mother's example; but Letitia held out her hand in a way that admitted of no question at all; she had no notion of being on such terms with the whole Barrett family.

Mrs. Bushe looked on in melancholy silence; her spirits had become lower in these last few days, as Letitia's had risen a little.

Some awful secret seemed to be weighing on her mind.

When Letitia went up-stairs to dress for dinner she was surprised to find Florinda in her room, consulting with her maid and a London workwoman over endless yards of white satin and a large box full of feathers and flowers.

Florinda looked round with startled eyes at the girl as she came in; she had not expected her quite so soon. Letitia stared at these preparations.

"What is all that? A new gown of yours?" she said to her cousin.

"Have you seen your papa, my dear, since our visitors went?" said Mrs. Bushe.

"No; how should I?" answered Letitia.

After several stormy interviews with his daughter, Sir George had ended by leaving her to herself, and as far as possible ignoring her existence; for the last week they had scarcely exchanged a word.

"He had something to tell you—I thought he would have told you," said Mrs. Bushe, rather confused.

"I have not seen him. What beautiful satin! It looks like somebody's wedding-gown."

Letitia took hold of the satin and shook it out on the floor, holding it against her own pretty figure. "There, Atkins, pick up my train. Don't you see I'm going to Court?" she said, laughing, to the maid.

"Miss Monkton will look beautiful, ma'am," said the workwoman, a person they often employed, turning to Mrs. Bushe for sympathy.

But in Florinda's face there was nothing but the deepest sadness.

"Mrs. Bushe hates these vanities," said Letitia. "You will be splendid for once, though, cousin Florinda. What a pity you did not get it in time for that ball!"

"Come into your room, dear child. I must speak to you," said Mrs. Bushe. "Do not mind these things now, Atkins; we will see them another time. I will ring when I want you."

"Well, what is the matter? Anything now?" said Letitia.

There was a straight hard little sofa at the foot of the bed, on which Mrs. Bushe sat down, while the girl stood in front of her.

"O Letitia," said Mrs. Bushe, "your father is very cruel. It is wrong of me to say it, I know, but I must. Is it possible that you are still the only one in this house, or even in this neighborhood, who does not know what is to happen next Thursday?"

In these days long after, when Letitia told the story of her life, she never could remember that moment without shivering. It was so cold, so sudden, the feeling of absolute loneliness, and then the almost passion of self-reliance which followed it. She was never the same again; that evening ended her childhood. It was a woman, cruelly hurt, but not in the least subdued, that stood before Mrs. Bushe and gazed at her silently.

Florinda was by far the most agitated of the two. She had expected a stormy scene with Letitia, but this stoniness was much more dreadful.

"My dear," she said, "sit down here. Speak to me!"

"I cannot conceive what you mean," said Letitia quietly. "You are talking riddles, and I hate them as much as papa does. What is to happen next Thursday?"

"O Letitia, you are so unlike yourself!" said Mrs. Bushe, beginning to cry.

"For Heaven's sake don't do that! Be reasonable," said Letitia. "I ask you a simple question: but I can answer it myself, for I understand now. You and papa are wonderful people indeed. Next Thursday is my wedding-day, when you mean to marry me to Humphrey Barrett.

"Everybody is charmed, with one exception; and that fine satin gown is expected to keep her quiet. Very clever indeed."

"Letitia, you will break my heart!" sighed Mrs. Bushe.

"You are doing your best to break mine; but fortunately it is not so fragile."

"What could I do? I was forced to obey Sir George. I thought he would have told you himself before this."

"I should like to understand the why and the wherefore of it all," said Letitia coolly.

"Your papa thought that if you found everything was finally settled with the Barretts, you would be more likely to submit quietly," said Mrs. Bushe. "He is going abroad again very soon, and he thought, considering all the circumstances, it would be best to leave you safely married. They are really very good people, and admire you so much."

Florinda spoke faintly and wistfully. Letitia listened with her eyes on the ground. There were no tears, no exclamations; she not even change color.

After a little pause she turned away from her cousin, and walked up to the table.

"We shall be late for dinner," she said. "You had better go and dress.

Florinda left her silently. This new mood of Letitia's, the cold indifference of her manner, was harder to bear than anything that had gone before. She longed to put her arms round the girl, to weep with her, to comfort her, to be reproached and scolded, if only she might give her love and sympathy.

If there had been any wild despair in Letitia's manner, such as she had read of in romances, she would have been frightened.

There was none, and yet she was frightened.

What made it still stranger and more unnatural was, that Letitia talked all through dinner to Sir George with a pleasantness which astonished him.

She had lately taken some interest in poultry, had been feeding the chickens and the ducks herself, and she wanted to know something about foreign fowls—how they were managed and fed, and what were the best breeds.

Sir George knew nothing, but tried to say something.

He also was uncomfortably conscious of the change in Letitia—that she had grown up in this one afternoon, that her heart was no longer in her face.

He wondered what it meant.

After dinner, when Mrs. Bushe got up to go into the drawing-room, Letitia remained a moment standing with her hands on the back of her chair, facing her father as he walked across to the door.

"Papa," she said, while both Sir George and Florinda hesitated between the table and the door, "I have to thank you for my beautiful wedding-gown."

Sir George tried to speak and to smile, stammered frightfully, and grunted out:

"Glad you are pleased with it."

"I should have liked longer notice," said Letitia, with a coolness which struck Mrs. Bushe as quite awful. "But I suppose it was not convenient to you. There is one thing I must ask, however."

"What is it? Anything I can do——" said Sir George, beginning to feel great relief and pride in the success of his plan.

"I think you forget how little I know of Mr. Humphrey Barrett. We really ought to make more acquaintance. I wish you would ask him to dine with us to-morrow."

"With the greatest pleasure, Letty. My dear girl, you little know how gratified I am," said Sir George earnestly. "Now mind, you must ask me for anything you want—anything that money can buy. No reward can be too great for dutifulness."

He came forward, as if he meant to kiss his daughter; but she did not seem to see this, and went quietly out of the room after her cousin.

Sir George, very much pleased, sat down to finish his port.

It was evident that he, at least, knew how to manage a refractory young woman.

Presently, Mrs. Bushe opened the door softly, came in, and sat down near him a little way from the table.

Sir George looked up, and wondered what was the matter with her.

He did not quite see why Florinda should choose to put on such a solemn face when everything was going well, when Letitia had made up her mind to submit, and had lifted such a weight of anxiety off her friends' shoulders.

"You don't look well, Florinda," said Sir George amiably. "You took nothing at dinner. Let me give you a glass of port."

Florinda thanked him, and declined this most decidedly.

"I am obliged to you," she said; "I am perfectly well."

"Ah, glad to hear it," said Sir George. "Well, is it some clever management of yours that has brought Letty to her senses? I give you great credit. I am most agreeably surprised."

"Oh, I don't want you to deceive yourself," said Mrs. Bushe, her voice trembling. "I am in great alarm about Letitia. She saw the white satin gown, and I was obliged to break it to her suddenly. I never saw anything so extraordinary as her manner. She is not submissive, Sir George. She is in despair."

"Despair! absurdity! Does it look like despair, begging me to ask Barrett to dinner? You are too sensitive and fanciful, Florinda, to understand a girl of Letty's character. She has a great power of accommodating herself to circumstances, of making up her mind strong on any one point. She inherits it from me. A power of self-conquest, in which you may, perhaps, be rather deficient. No reproach to you. It belongs to the natural character. Letitia is only behaving as I confidently expected her to behave. She has been too much indulged. As soon as she finds that I am seriously in earnest, she submits with a good grace. Despair! you have been reading too many novels."

Florinda had a dim idea that she could not trust her own senses, and therefore she quietly accepted Sir George's contradictions.

First he was agreeably surprised; then it was what he confidently expected.

After all, it did not matter much what his feelings were.

She sighed and got up.

"I can only tell you my impressions," she said. "Letitia's manner to me is a new thing. She is reserved, cold, abrupt. She sits buried in thought, or talks in a strained unnatural way. She is not herself. I believe that if by any means she can escape this marriage, she will. And I must say, Sir George, at the risk of offending you, that in my opinion, by forcing her into it, you are doing a great cruelty to your only child."

"My esteem for you is very great," Sir George replied gravely. "But on this subject we differ, and must continue to do so. I am satisfied with my arrangements for Letitia, and with her acceptance of them. At present I desire to look no further."

He had his hand on the handle of the door, ready to open it.

"I wonder where Captain Crosby is," said Mrs. Bushe.

"Why should you vex me by mentioning his name?"

"I do not believe a word of that story about his birth."

"He may not be a tailor's son," said Sir George, "but he is an adventurer of some kind, of course. Otherwise he would have made no mystery about his family. Cannot you understand, Florinda, what I explained to you the other day—that it is specially to save Letitia from any consequences of an absurd fancy for him, that I have hastened on this marriage? A year or two hence you will do me justice. You will not talk of my cruelty, but of my wisdom."

Sir George bowed his cousin out of the room and went back to his port, very much satisfied with himself.

He was glad he had kept his temper with poor Florinda, provoking as she might be; of course all she said was dictated by sincere affection for Letitia and himself.

Still the *role* of Cassandra was a very tiresome one, and he wondered she had not the tact and good sense to avoid it.

CHAPTER IX.

LETITIA began the next day by being measured for her satin gown.

She went through this without showing much interest; but also without any appearance of disgust.

Afterwards she put on her red cloak and went out to feed the chickens.

There was a large paved yard behind the house, with stables and coach-houses and dog-kennels all round, and a wooden granary in the middle, built on posts several feet above the ground.

On the steep steps of this granary Letitia stood with her bag of grain, and at the sound of her voice the feathered creatures ran and flew from every corner of the place. White pigeons came fluttering down from the roofs and chimneys, and perched about her; cocks strutted, hens cackled and quarrelled; the little lady was in the midst of a noisy greedy crowd, over which she poured showers of yellow grain.

While she was doing this the yard-gate opened, and a tall young woman came in with a basket of eggs on her arm.

She half paused at the sight of Letitia, standing there in the sun. Then she curtsied and came towards her, stepping carefully among the chickens.

Miss Monkton looked rather curiously at her bright rosy face, at the clear dark eyes which were watching her so anxiously, and glancing round now and then as she came, as if to make sure that there was nobody within sight or hearing.

All the doors were shut; the men were busy or away; only one old dog looked out of his kennel, wagged his tail, and went back again.

"Pray, ma'am, do you remember me?" said the young woman with the eggs, standing at the foot of the steps, and dropping another curtsey.

There was no peasant shyness in her manner, but the well-bred fearless ease of a yeoman's daughter.

She was well dressed too, and carried her basket gracefully. And there was a kindliness in her smile which made Letitia smile too as she answered her.

"I am sure I have seen you before."

"I have brought eggs and butter to the house many a time. I've got some eggs here now; but I came to-day on purpose to see you ma'am. I am Kitty Pratt, of Jack's Croft."

"Can I do anything for you?" said Letitia.

"Will you kindly read this, ma'am, and give me an answer to take back?"

A small sealed note appeared from under the folds of Kitty's shawl.

Letitia felt almost dizzy as she took it; the writing was familiar to her.

She turned away to read it.

Kitty quietly set down her basket, took the bag of grain, and went on feeding the impatient fowls.

"The bearer of this can be trusted. Will you send me word whether the terrible report I hear is true? I am not far from you, but dare not compromise you by appearing. Tell me that if it is true, it is against your will, and it shall never happen."

Letitia read this three or four times over.

Then she turned quite calmly to Kitty Pratt.

"This note tells me you are to be trusted," she said.

Kitty's eyes met hers with a smile that was nothing but truth.

"I see you are," said Letitia. "The gentleman who sent it, is he at your house?"

"Yes," said Kitty. "He came two days ago, and asked my father to take him in. He wished to be in this neighborhood without any one knowing. He has not told us his name. We call him the Captain."

"Tell him to wait till to-morrow," said Letitia. "He shall have an answer to-morrow, do you understand? Tell him there is one chance to be tried; but it may fail. Will you remember that?"

Kitty nodded.

"Have not you butter or eggs, or something to bring here to-morrow?"

"I could bring two pounds of butter, if Mrs. Bushe liked to order it."

"I order it. Bring it to the house about this time to-morrow, and, as you go back, look for me outside the gates, under the trees yonder; you can carry my answer. Thank you. Now take your eggs to the house."

Kitty curtsied and went, without another word.

All that day Letitia was a great trial to her affectionate cousin.

When she answered or spoke to her, there was a studied carelessness in her manner, an abruptness that was almost rude, and quite silenced gentle Mrs. Bushe.

She also felt that the girl avoided her as much as possible.

Towards evening Letitia seemed a little excited; her cheeks were very pink, and her eyes were brighter than usual.

She did not put on one of her prettiest gowns to receive young Barrett; but in spite of that, Mrs. Bushe thought she had seldom looked prettier.

It was a painful prettiness, though, to any one who knew Letitia well.

As to Humphrey, his position seemed quite to puzzle him.

He was rather grave and silent all through dinner, though Sir George did his best to draw him out.

Certainly no stranger, looking in upon them, would have guessed that the two young people were to be married to each other in a week.

They sat on the opposite sides of the table, and hardly exchanged a word.

After dinner, in the drawing-room, Letitia said to Mrs. Bushe:

"Will you do me one more favor?"

"One more, my dear?" said Florinda wonderingly.

"Will you let me alone with Humphrey, when he comes in? Pray don't hesitate. It is the only chance of our understanding each other, and I suppose you think that desirable."

"O Letitia you puzzle me completely. If you knew what I feel!" sighed Florinda.

Letitia smiled coldly.

"My dear, do you hate this man?"

"What a strange question! Hate, him! O no, I am not so uncharitable. All men are our brothers, you know, so it would be wicked to hate one of them. But don't look agonised, for I really have seen him much worse than he is to-night. The idea of marrying me seems to have tamed him; he is quite awed and downcast. I shall have to tell him not to be afraid of me."

"Letitia," said Mrs. Bushe very gravely, "this whole business distresses me more than I can say. But to hear you speak in this terrible, unnatural, almost unwomanly way, is the worst part of it all. I will go, for I cannot bear to be with you. Why did you not say at once to your father that you would not and could not marry this man?"

"Papa has a bad ally in you, cousin Florinda," answered Letitia quietly, "And it is the last thing I should have have expected of you, to advise disobedience. But when one is driven to the end of one's resources, and is without friends or help, one must fight people with their own weapons. A hateful thing to do, but sometimes the only thing. You must hope, now, that Humphrey Barrett and I may agree."

"I don't in the least understand you," said Mrs. Bushe. "I think I shall go mad, if I talk to you any longer."

"Then pray go and rest in your room," said Letitia.

Mrs. Bushe went.

Letitia walked restlessly up and down the room till she heard the distant opening of a door, and a heavy step coming along the hall.

Then she sat down by the fire with a screen in her hand, to receive Humphrey.

He was rather startled by finding her alone. All his bullying self-assertion seemed to have left him; he was tamed, as he said, by this swift and strange realization of his wishes.

He drew a chair near her, sat down, and looked at her. Letitia glanced at him over her screen, and said the evening was rather cold.

"Is it? I have not felt it so," said Humphrey.

Then they were both silent for a minute or two. Humphrey was angry with himself for being such an ass as to have nothing to say to this lovely girl, who had actually consented to be his wife—so her father assured him; but even to his dim perceptions she was wrapped in an icy mist, beyond his power of penetrating. At last, rather bluntly, he put some of his thoughts into words.

"Is it not strange to think what will have happened, this time next week! Can you imagine it at all? I can't."

"O, perfectly," said Letitia; "I have heard so much about it, to-day and yesterday."

"Well, I'm very glad to hear that," said Humphrey. "I really was in despair; and you don't know what it is to me to have it all settled like this.

"My people admire you, and all that, as much as I do. We none of us thought that you would ever bring your mind to it; but you shall never regret it, I promise you that."

Heavens! what sort of love-making was this? Even in her desperate position Letitia felt as if she must laugh. She did smile, and this had the effect of cheering and emboldening Humphrey.

"Letitia—I don't know a prettier name," he said. "I've been told that it means 'joy,' and if so it suits you well. One never could be dismal with you."

"I am glad you think so," said Letitia, "though I am afraid you are mistaken. I wish I knew you a little better, Mr. Barrett."

"Well, you will soon do that. But call me Humphrey, if you please," said the young squire, pulling his chair a little nearer.

Letitia, however, did not look encouraging, and this was his furthest advance.

"I want to tell you something, and to ask you something," she said, "and I wish I knew how you are likely to answer me."

"How do you think, now?"

"Kindly and generously, I hope," said Letitia, in a low voice.

"I'm glad you do me so much justice." said Humphrey. "Always be true and open with me; you will find it your best policy. You don't understand what I feel for you, I see that. Come, then, try how far you can trust an Englishman."

Letitia changed color slightly at this last word.

"You know," she said, "that all this arrangement for next week was made by papa without any knowledge or consent of mine. I only heard of it when everything was finally settled.

"I might have made a great fuss, but I am tired—I have had trouble an vexation enough lately, and I thought that my best way was to speak to you."

"We have all had vexation enough, and from the same cause," said Humphrey, as she stopped for a moment.

"Then you understand me. I have only to tell you that I meant what I said that day. It is dreadful for me to say this to you, but this treatment has driven me to forget that I am a young girl. Nobody will tell you if I don't."

Letitia turned her face towards him. All the pretty color had been driven from it by strong feeling; she was white and like a statue, except her deep blue eyes.

But all the sweetness was gone from them they gazed at Humphrey with a sad wild sternness. Most men would have felt a little nervous at the idea of marrying the owner of them. Humphrey scowled jealously, as he had so often done before.

"What! you are still thinking about that impostor fellow?"

"Wait; you have not heard all yet," said Letitia hastily. She felt that in another minute or two it would be impossible to speak to him.

She got up, and Humphrey did the same; they stood two or three yards apart in front of the fire.

"I want to appeal to you," Letitia said. "If you are kind and generous, I must tell you what you will do now. It is for your own advantage as well as mine. Do you want to marry a woman who will make your life miserable?"

"I certainly shall not do that," said Humphrey.

"Ah, well, if you wish to avoid it, you will set me free. Tell papa we have agreed that we don't understand each other, that we could never make each other happy. I will tell him so too. Let me go."

"Here is a fine position for a man," said Humphrey—"to be thrown aside like an old glove, because of a mad fancy for a fellow no better than an Irish beggar! I'll wager anything you like you will never see or hear of him again. He has played his game and lost it."

"Perhaps I never may see him again," Letitia. "That has nothing to do with what I ask you; will you release me from this engagement, that was made without my knowledge?"

"Now I call that asking too much." said Humphrey. "All my friends know I am going to be married; I've asked them to the wedding. My father has made law arrangements for me—everything has been settled. A fine fool I should look if it was off now.

"And you can't expect it; I who have loved you so long and so faithfully, and was so happy at the thoughts of your having given in at last. Sir George so pleased too—everybody satisfied—and you must needs go and upset it all."

There was something so grotesquely peevish in Humphrey's indignation, that Letitia began to feel a sort of contemptuous pity for him. It was impossible to carry on any tragical pleading with a man like this.

"There's nothing in any of those reasons," she said, "to compare with a life of misery."

misery."

"But it will not be that. As soon as you get used to it, you will be happy and thankful," Humphrey persisted.

"Letitia shook her head.

"It is no use arguing the matter," she said. "I hear papa coming. Once for all, will you release me or not?"

"No, that I won't," answered Hnmphrey decidedly.

Letitia left the room instantly, gliding past Sir George in the passage, and springing up-stairs so quickly that he had not time to speak to her. Mrs. Bushe, going down presently, found that she was fled; and was not much surprised that she did not appear again that night. Humphrey went away soon after, without mentioning the trying scene he had gone through.

When Mrs. Bushe went up-stairs to bed, she ventured to look into Letitia's room.

The girl was sitting in her dressing-gown by the fire.

"Come in and say good-night," she said, in a voice that went to her cousins heart; it was the old Letitia come back again, only with a new tenderness of manner.

"I love you, because you are the only one of them all that loves me. Don't break your heart about me, dear Florinda."

She held out her arms. Mrs. Bushe laid her head on her shoulders and cried, while Letitia kissed and soothed her gently; there were tears in her eyes.

"There, don't be unhappy," said Letitia. "It will all be right in the end. It is no use fighting against Fate you know. Good-night. Go to bed now, and don't think about me any more."

Mrs. Bushe, however lay awake all that night. Once she felt obliged to go and see what Letitia was doing, whether she was able to forget her trouble in sleep. But the door between the rooms was locked; and to her cousin's tender inquiries in the morning Letitia would only answer, "Why shouldn't I sleep?"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

* * *

For Those Who Like Them.—To make punch extract the essential oil from the rind of one large lemon by rubbing it with pieces of lump sugar. To the sugar so treated add the juice of two lemons and of two Seville oranges, their rinds pared very thin, and about ½lb. of lump sugar. Pound the whole in a mortar until it becomes a thick syrup, then gradually add one quart of boiling water. More sugar or more lemon juice may be now added according to taste. Then add one pint of old rum, and half a pint of French brandy. More boiling water may be added according to taste. Bishop.—Stick a Seville orange all over with cloves, and roast it before a slow fire, allowing the top of the cloves to be slightly charred. Put small but equal quantities of cinnamon, cloves, mace, and allspice, well pounded, with ½lb. of sugar, and the thin rind of a Seville orange or lemon, into a small saucepan, add half a pint of water, and let the whole boil until reduced one half. Empty a bottle of claret into a perfectly clean saucepan, and put it on the fire until it simmers. Add the roasted orange and the prepared spice; let the mixture stand on the hob for ten minutes, then pour it into a bowl, add sugar to taste, a little grated nutmeg, and just before serving fill a tablespoonful of brandy, set it alight, and pour it over the brew. Slips of dry toast or rusks should be served with it.

* * *

Family Pride.—The English family of Vere, earls of Oxford, pretended to deduce its pedigree from the Roman Emperor, Lucius Verus. Philip Dormer Stanhope, earl of Chesterfield, placed among the portraits of his ancestors two heads, inscribed Adam de Stanhope, and Eve de Stanhope. The French family of the late Duke de Levis have a picture in their chateau, in which Noah is represented going into the ark, and carrying under his arm a small trunk, on which is written, "Papers belonging to the Levis family."

* * *

HAYESVILLE, Ohio, Feb. 11, 1880.
I am very glad to say I have tried Hop Bitters, and never took anything that did me as much good. I only took two bottles and I would not take $100 for the good they did me. I recommend them to my patients and get the best results from their use.
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New Publications.

The Nursery for December is, as usual, filled with excellent reading and beautiful pictures, well adapted for youngest readers. Published 36 Bromfield St., Boston. $1.50 a year.

Potter's American Monthly for December has an unusually attractive list of contents. Among the articles, several of which are finely illustrated, are: A Famous Old Church; Another World Down Here; Message from the Dead; A Christmas Gift; Day Dawn; A Man Without a Country; An Experience with Modern Ghosts; Out of her Sphere, etc., etc. The departments are also well stocked. Potter & Co., publishers, this city.

The contents of the *Sanitarian* for December are such as to highly commend themselves to all interested in sanitary matters. Among the more prominent articles are: The Germ Theory; Baby's Troubles; House Drainage; Medical Alcoholism. It is, altogether, a magazine worth its subscription price many times over. Bell & Co., New York, publishers.

Lippincott's Magazine for January, beginning the new volume, contains: Seville, by S. P. Scott, illustrated; Pets, by Felix L. Oswald, illustrated; Stephen Guthrie, a story, illustrated; A Christmas Card; A Comedy of Errors, a Christmas story, by Henry A. Beers; Railway Stations, by Edward C. Bruce; Hazel, a story, by Clara Hall Randolph; Unrest, by Clara Louise Bottsford; Decoration Under Difficulties, a sketch, by Helen Campbell: The Bank Secret, a story, by William O. Stoddard; Dear Little Alice, by William H. Howells; Our Common Schools, by Richard T. Ely; A Trip to Tophet, by M. H. G.; Our Monthly Gossip; Public Topics—Guiteau; Place aux Dames—Rose-Bud Luncheons; Art Matters—Exhibitions of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and the Philadelphia Society of Artists; Anecdotical and Miscellaneous—Atonement of Blood; Literature of the Day; The Collecting Mania, with six illustrations. J. B. Lippincott & Co., publishers, 715 and 717 Market St., this city. $3.00 a year.

NEW MUSIC.

We have received a number of copies of Russell's Musical Library. They embrace part-songs, solos, etc., and include sacred and popular selections. Great taste has been shown in the collection, and all are finely adapted for home or devotional use. The finest composers of this school of music are represented—both past and present—and considering the excellence of the works and their cheapness—from ten to twenty-five cents per copy—should become popular. J. M. Russell, 59 Bromfield St, Boston, Mass.

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THE CENTURY.
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FOR JANUARY.

Another great number,—will be issued December 23d. It contains: "Reminiscences of Thiers," by the Hon. E. B. Washburne; "The Increase of Divorce," a timely and striking paper, by Washington Gladden; "From Mentor to Elberon," by Col. A. F. Rockwell, an interesting anecdotal article, dealing with events from Garfield's nomination till his death, with an engraving by Kruell of the portrait sent by Mrs. Garfield to the Queen. A paper on "The Revival of Burano Lace" contains a full-page portrait of Queen Margaret of Italy, with a sketch made for THE CENTURY by the Princess Louise of England. There are also striking illustrated papers on Sculpture, "The Caverns of Luray," "A Provincial Capital of Mexico," etc., etc., with a short story by Harriet Prescott Spofford. "The Atlanta Cotton Exposition" is fully described in "The World's Work" department. "Topics of the Time," hitherto the work of the late Dr. Holland, will now consist of contributions from various able pens.

THE SERIAL STORIES,

Mrs. Burnett's "Through One Administration," a story of Washington life, and W. D. Howells' "A Modern Instance," will be continued through the volume.

A NEW EDITION

of the December CENTURY has just been issued. Subscribers or purchasers of THE CENTURY MAGAZINE will do well to begin with the *November* number, the first of the new volume and under the new name, and thus secure the opening chapters of the serials. The coming year of THE CENTURY will surpass anything in the past. The next issue (February) will be the MIDWINTER NUMBER, which is to have the new cover-design by Elihu Vedder, and many other special features.

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Our Young Folks.

LITTLE DOT MORTIMER.

BY L. T. MEADE.

OLD PETER MORLEY was the mystery of the little village of Sherbourne.

Not that some strange story belonged to him, but simply that he had, as far as the neighbors knew, no story at all, and this vexed them and excited their curiosity.

Peter lived in a little, low, thatched cottage overgrown with ivy, while, in summer, roses and honeysuckles drooped from the rustic porch, and the tiny garden in front was full of sweet flowers.

But no one ever gained admittance to the cottage; nor did the door ever stand invitingly open.

Peter seldom appeared, and never exchanged pleasant greetings with his neighbors.

The most envied woman in the parish was Mrs. Mortimer, for did not her cottage stand exactly opposite to Peter's house, and could she not, by straining her head out of her bedroom window, catch a glimpse of the fire in his little kitchen?

It certainly was not much, but any one with Mrs. Carter's powers of talk and invention would have made much of it.

But all the gossips agreed that this favorable position was quite thrown away on Mrs. Mortimer.

She was a gentle, quiet woman, who never pryed into her neighbors' concerns, unless she could help or comfort them in their troubles, and then she could never be persuaded to talk about them.

But there was one person in the little cottage who took a lively interest in old Peter, and that was Dot, Mrs. Mortimer's little daughter.

She had overheard the remarks of the neighbors with the sharp ears that proverbially belong to such little folk.

She wondered why the old man opposite did not make friends with other people, and whether he was happy.

And she kept wondering day after day and always ended as she began—wondering.

Christmas Day rose bright and beautiful. It was very cold, and all night long the night frost had been busy weaving a garment for every tree and every hedge of sparkling whiteness.

But no brightness shone into the heart of old Peter Morley as he sat over his lonely breakfast. He was tall, fine-looking man, with a long white beard, but his face was overshadowed with gloomy bitterness; and on this morning, when all around were rejoicing in the beauty of the day, and many were made glad by the message it brings of peace and joy, his heart remained unsoftened, and bitter thoughts took the place of the sweet thoughts which Christmas should inspire.

Suddenly a colder breath of air seemed to fall on him, and a slight rustle made him look up. He was so astonished at what he saw that his pipe slipped from his lips and lay in fragments on the hearth.

For close beside him stood a little figure dressed in blue, while a hood of the same color framed a rosy, dimpled face set round with golden curls. Then, too, the half-opened door was a more visible entrance than fairies are supposed to need.

A sweet little childish voice said, "Isn't you glad it's Xmas Day?" and a soft fat little hand was thrust into his. Peter did not know what to do or say.

A strange thrill of delight ran through him at the sight of this sweet face, and almost unconsciously his fingers closed over the little hand. "Doesn't you love the bells?" continued the child eagerly.

"I don't know," said Peter doubtfully; "they sound pretty enough. But what's your name, little girl?"

"My name's Dorothy Mortimer, but mother calls me Dot, 'cos I'se so little. Is you going to church?"

"No, no," said Peter bitterly, "I haven't clothes, I don't go to church now."

"Doesn't you?" said Dot. "We's going—mother and me. You come too."

"No, no," said the old man again. "I'm not fit to go with you."

"But," persisted Dot, "you looks real nice," she added, looking up admiringly at the old man. "You's like my grandfather, do come."

And the end of it was Mrs. Mortimer was certainly a good deal startled to see her little daughter leading their mysterious neighbor up the garden. Dot ran forward to meet her mother with a joyful cry, "Mother, he's coming too, isn't it nice?" Mrs. Mortimer with gentle tact welcomed Peter and showed no surprise at his unexpected arrival, and they set out at once.

The little church to which they were going lay quite out of the way of the ordinary village folk, so that they met no curious or wondering glances as they went.

When the sermon began little Dot grew sleepy, and her mother, taking off her hood, was going to lift her on to her knee, when old Peter eagerly stretched out his trembling hands and took the little form in his arms, the pretty golden curls mingling with his long white beard.

God was using a little child to preach to him the gospel of His peace and good-will to men, and the ears, so long deaf to all but the murmurings of his own discontent were opened to hear the message of love and mercy.

The next day the story of Peter's Christmas visit to the church with Mrs. Mortimer and Dot reached the eager ears of Mrs. Carter, and she paid the widow an early visit in order to find out all the particulars which she felt that her neighbor ought to have gleaned. But she was doomed to disappointment.

Mrs. Mortimer had had too much good feeling to have made all the inquiries which her gossip-loving acquaintance would not have failed to make, and could tell her nothing at all about the old man's previous history, or the way in which he gained a livelihood.

Meanwhile Peter seemed to have fallen back into the old routine in which this wonderful Christmas Day had made such a break.

It is true that Dot now ran in sometimes, and sat watching him at his work. He was a skilful wood-carver, and occasionally, when his carvings were finished, he took them over to a neighboring town, where he found a ready sale for them, and this was the mysterious package which had so excited the curiosity of the village matrons.

But though the old man loved the little girl who brought back the memory of his own lost child, yet he was far from happy.

He now knew what it was to have his life brightened by the loving deeds of others, and conscience whispered that he ought to give forth as well as to receive, especially as he could not plead the excuse of poverty. For Peter Morley was not the poor man many thought him; but since those whom he loved had been taken from him, the love of money had sprung up in his heart, hardening it and closing it against the world.

A dreadful struggle was going on in the old man's heart between his long-cherished love of money and the holy feelings which Dot's little loving deed had awakened in him.

He had lent money to a tradesman and he knew that poor Dawson's business had been failing for some time, and that he and his large family were very sickly, and that they had very great difficulty in raising the very high interest which he so exactingly demanded.

Peter's better feelings whispered that as more than the original amount lent had been already paid in interest, he should forgive the debt and set Dawson free.

He did not need the money, for he had a sufficient sum in the bank to keep him in comfort when age should rob his hand of its cunning. But his money-loving nature was not so easily subdued.

Had he not a right to his own earnings? and if "folks can't pay, they shouldn't borrow."

So day by day passed away, and Peter seemed falling back into his old morose self. Even Dot was not always welcome, for her loving, happy little and simple prattle reminded him of the sweet message of love and good-will to others which Christmas brings.

The time, too, was drawing near for receiving the monthly payment, and still the conflict went on. But at last the victory was won, and Peter, opening his old desk took out poor Dawson's acknowledgment of the debt, and, packing up his work, made his way to the town where he transacted his business.

It was late in the morning before he reached Dawson's house.

A miserable fire was burning in the grate, and when the poor man appeared he looked wan and wretched. He began timidly, too evidently fearing some outburst of wrath, "I'm very sorry, Mr. Morley, I haven't got quite the amount. Me and my wife's been ill, and it's been a hard push to get it, but we'll try and make it up next time," and he put the money doubtfully upon the table.

"Sit down, man," said Peter feeling quite nervous in this unusual work of mercy. "I've been thinking you've been paying for a long time, and—and——" Peter had prepared quite a proper speech, but it all faded from his memory at the sight of that pale, weary face.

"The fact is, Mr. Dawson, I've been hard on you, and I've made up my mind that we'll wipe off the debt now, and here's your paper, and you'd better burn it."

Poor Dawson had to grasp the table with both hands, so great was his surprise and agitation, and the words of thanks came slowly; but the feeling which his face expressed was more eloquent than many words. At last, seizing old Peter's hand, he gasped out, "The Lord bless you for this! Ah, it's such a relief. I've had to stint my little ones till they've been nearly starved for want of food and fire." But Peter could not bear many thanks, and with a hearty shake, he took his leave of Dawson. He made his way to a shop and bought a Noah's ark for Dot and a packet of nice tea for her mother, and then turned his face homewards.

Peter certainly had less money than when he left home, but he was not a poorer man, there was a wealth of quiet peace and happiness in his soul such as he had never possessed before.

His heart was so light that, as he walked along, he actually began to whistle a gay air—a thing he had not done for years. Even the passers-by noticed his happy face, and more than one remarked that "The old chap's cheerful-like."

Peter did not fail to make his appearance at Mrs. Mortimer's just as the widow was putting on the kettle for their tea.

The Noah's ark was duly presented, and was the source of great joy to the little girl, and if any curious neighbors had happened to call they would have been astonished to find the grim stranger sitting on the brick floor, busily engaged in making the animals follow Noah and his family with due decorum.

Dot's friendship with old Peter grew stronger every day.

She soon enlisted his sympathies in her benevolent exertions on behalf of all distressed animals, and, to her great delight, soon succeeded in establishing in his cottage a dog with three legs and an afflicted raven.

Peter's little house was never "lonesome" again, for, besides constant visits from his little neighbor, he often, on his return from the neighboring town, brought back one or two of the pale little Dawsons to see what fresh air and country life could do for them.

What a happy day their next Christmas was!

Mrs. Mortimer's little house was taxed to its utmost limit, and Peter was obliged to bring over his own chairs for the company.

He provided the dinner, and invited Dawson and his family to share it with them, and a happier and merrier party could not be found.

But Mrs. Mortimer's eyes often wandered to Peter's pretty Christmas present, which hung over the mantelpiece.

It was a beautifully carved likeness of her little girl, just as he had first seen her—the sweet, dimpled face shaded by the soft curls, and framed by the folds of her little hood, and underneath were cut in rustic letters the words, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

THE O'HARA STAKES.

BY HENRY FRITH.

KATE O'HARA was the beauty of our pleasant party at the Elms last Christmas.

I remember our little silence of admiration as she came into the drawing room just before dinner was announced, and a great sensation her arrival made, though she could not have acted more quietly or meekly if she had been a cat.

Half-a-dozen young ladies who, before her advent, looked pretty enough, suddenly became quite uninteresting to a corresponding number of bachelors, and even we married gentlemen paused awhile in our talk of short-horns to steal an admiring glance.

We had resumed our bovine conversation, and were diverging, if I remember aright, in the direction of pigs, when my wife came up to me and whispered—"That's little Kate O'Hara!"

Why did my cheek glow and my heart throb?

Why did the name of one whom I had not seen since she was a little child recall at once the crowning happiness and chief confusion of my life? It shall be told, terribly, anon.

The six bachelors "entered themselves" immediately for "the O'Hara stakes," as one of them was subsequently pleased to designate the dreaming of Love's young dream; and two of them—a middy and an undergraduate—got the start, and made the running at the most reckless pace I ever saw.

Indeed, the sailor proposed on the third evening and was declined with such good-natured cheerfulness, that he seemed to be pleased than otherwise; whereas the collegian, who was of a poetical turn, took his refusal, the day following, very seriously to heart, and passed the remaining part of his visit in sorrow and the shrubberies.

The other competitors, unattached (except to Kate), were disposed of at an archery ball; and the race then lay between Charley Northcote, captain of hussars, and Philip Lee, curate.

It was a grand set-to, I can tell you.

If Charley had the handsomest face, and played with a bullet pendent from his watch-chain, but which had previously rested in his leg—could talk of the time "when I was in the Crimea," Philip had the more intellectual expression, and had won at Oxford the undergraduate's "blue ribbon"—the prize for English verse.

Charley, it is true, when we were skating on the lake, produced upon the ice such wondrous "eagles" as Audubon never dreamed of but he was, on the other hand, first to own, when the frost broke up, that, "in a really good thing with hounds, there was but one of them could catch the parson."

For Philip, though he did not hunt in his own parish, could "go like a bird" out of it, whenever he could get a mount.

One night before our party separated, we had a grand performance of charades, and in the last of these the Reverend Mr. Lee won immense applause as a ferocious captain of banditti, acting with the greatest enthusiasm, and having prepared for himself, with the co-operation of a cork, a pair of moustaches which rivalled Charley's.

We were to appear at supper in our charade costumes, and were awaiting the announcement of that refection, when I noticed an extraordinary phenomenon, which caused me instantly and earnestly to whisper to Miss O'Hara, "I have something to say to you. Come at once."

We passed unnoticed through the crowded drawing-room into the library, still littered with our theatrical properties.

Seizing a dagger, and assuming a characteristic scowl (I was attired as a brigand's assistant), I bade her "Listen!" And she (I see her now in her pretty hat and cloak, for she had represented in our last scene the young English countess stopped by the robbers), ever ready for burlesque and mirth—as she supposed all this to be—made answer, solemnly, "Say on!"

"Twelve years ago, Kate O'Hara, I wooed and won, in the home of your childhood, the lady who is now my wife.

"On a sweet summer's eve I found my love sitting under an acacia, and upon a garden-seat, the property of your respected sire.

"Hard by, you, then a little child, were swinging in a swing.

"These same long, silken Irish lashes drooped over those deep blue-eyes, and we never dreamed that you took note of us sealing, in the usual manner, our vows of mutual love.

"Judge, then, how intense our agony, how complete and awful our abasement, when, as we rejoined the festive throng for coffee, you cried aloud for all to hear, 'Oh mamma! those two did so kiss each other, when I was swinging in the elm!'

"For twelve years, Kate O'Hara, the memory of that humiliation has troubled my indignant soul; but, at last, I am avenged—*Look here!*"

I held before her one of the hand looking-glasses which lay on the table near, and she was preparing to say something in the dramatic style, as she snatched it from me with the proud air of a tragedy queen, when her eye caught the reflection of her face, and in a moment that fair countenance was blanched and pale, and she stood with her head drooping, speechless; for upon her lip, reader, she saw, as I had seen, the certain sign and trace that, in some obscure corner behind the scenes, the race had been decided for the "O'Hara Stakes," and that the Brigand Lee had won. He had left half his cork moustache on that lovely lip.

"Kate," I said, "you cannot be vexed with me, for I congratulate you with all my heart.

"May you be as happy, dear girl, with our friend the robber, as 'those two' have been happy, whom you saw 'so kissing each other' from beneath those silken lashes as you sat swinging in the elm!"

I have had my revenge; and among our guests at Christmas, none will receive a more hearty welcome than the Reverend Mr. Lee and his beautiful young wife.

◆

THE GREAT IN PRIVATE.—Swift relieved his tense and tragic moods by harnessing his servants with cords—on one occasion he insisted on harnessing his learned and respectable friend Dr. Sheridan—and driving them up and down the stairs and through the rooms of his deanery. Peter the Great sought to unbend himself by being wheeled over the flower-beds and neat parterres of his host's garden in a wheel-barrow, as poor Sir William Temple found to his cost. Cardinal Mazarin is said to have been fond of shutting himself up in a room and jumping over the chair, arranged in positions varying according to the degrees of difficulty in clearing them.

Samuel Clarke relieved his theological pursuits in the same way, and on one occasion seeing a pedantic fellow approaching, said to the pupil who was sharing his amusement: "Now we must stop, for a fool is coming in." Old Burton, the author of the "Anatomy of Melancholy," the only book which got Dr. Johnson out of his bed two hours before he intended to rise, found his chief recreation in going down to Folly Bridge at Oxford and listening to the ribaldry of the bargees; "which did clear away his vapors, and make him laugh as he would die."

Innocent III., relieved his graver amusement of playing at nine-pins with the potentates of Europe by gossiping familiarly with an old monk on a seat of a fountain in the Vatican. He would listen for hours to the stories and pointless anecdotes with which his humble companion, who had travelled a great deal, regaled him.

The lighter hours of good Bishop Corbet have been very graphically described by one who knew him well. His lordship's favorite companion was his chaplain, Dr. Lushington. When the business of the day was over, the Bishop delighted to descend with this faithful henchman into the cellar of the episcopal palace. Corbet would then doff his hood, saying, "There lies the doctor," he would then divest himself of his gown, adding, "There lies the bishop." The glasses were filled and the toast was drunk. "Here's to thee, Lushington!" "Here's to thee Corbet." The celebrated Dean Aldrich was the slave of his pipe.

Of the amusements of Domitian, Suetonius tells a curious anecdote. "At the beginning of his reign," writes that delightful gossip, 'the Emperor used to spend daily an hour by himself in private, during which time he was wholly taken up in catching flies, and striking them through the body with a bodkin." Goldsmith, Shelley and [illegible] would while away whole days in romping with children. Of all the pastimes in which philosophers have unbent themselves, perhaps the most extraordinary was that of Spinoza. He devoted much of his leisure to catching and training spiders. These creatures he would pit against each other in single combat, laughing immoderately at their manoeuvres and carefully seeing that they fought fairly.

◆

A HAPPY SIGHT.—Did you take pains to notice the operation of Holman's Pad upon a peevish, sick, irritable baby, that has suffered and cried its life nearly away, and which nothing has hitherto caused to thrive and be happy?

It is very interesting. The first sign of improvement is seen in the regularity and length of the little one's naps. Then come good appetite, regular bowels, the end of crying and worriment, and finally, rosy, dimpled cheeks, bright eyes and a tendency to get fat—in short, a bouncing, happy, beautiful baby.

And there has been no dosing, no strangulation, no destruction of the stomach by drugs. Just a natural cure in Nature's way. The father's heartache is gone, the poor tired mother gets a rest, and baby—lovely as the day is long—makes the whole house happy.

HOLMAN'S PADS for sale by all druggists, or sent by mail, postpaid, on receipt of $2.

Address HOLMAN PAD CO.,
744 Broadway, N. Y.

Grains of Gold.

Exercise is the best tonic.

Prayer purifies; it is a self-preached sermon.

His praise is lost who waits till all commend.

Be great in act as you have been in thought.

The body of a sensualist is the coffin of a dead soul.

He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.

We give advice by the bucket, but take it by the grain.

Benevolence and feeling ennoble the most trifling actions.

Avarice is to the intellect what sensuality is to the morals.

Custom may lead a man into many errors, but it justifies none.

The applause of a single human being is of great consequence.

Doing good is the only certainly happy action of a man's life.

He that is not open to conviction, is not qualified for discussion.

To live is not to live for one's self alone, let us help one another.

Adversity borrows its sharpest sting through our impatience.

The truly wise man should have no keeper of his secret but himself.

Whatever has exceeded its due bounds is ever in a state of instability.

The human heart is like heaven—the more angels the more room.

The evening of life brings with it its lamps if we will but light them.

The greatest hatred, like the greatest virtue and the worst dogs, is quiet.

Experience wounded is the school where man learns wisdom out of pain.

We are often prophets to others only because we are our own historians.

Prosperity is no just scale. Adversity is the only balance to weigh friends.

Next to acquiring good friends, the best acquisition is that of good books.

It is the inseparable fault and constant ill of ambition never to look behind it.

Be calm in arguing, for fierceness makes error a fault, and truth discourtesy.

To abandon yourself to rage is often to bring upon yourself the fault of another.

The Bible is the window in this prison of hope through which we look and see eternity.

It is from the remembrance of joys we have lost that the arrows of affliction are pointed.

Brahms once asked of Force: "Who is stronger than thou?" She replied: "Address."

To be thankful for what we grasp exceeding our proportion, is to add hypocrisy to injustice.

The brightest crowns that are worn in heaven have been worn through sorrow and tribulation.

He is rich whose income is more than his expenses, and he is poor whose expenses exceed his income.

All our actions take their hues from the complexion of the heart, as landscapes their variety from light.

No man can be brave who considers pain the greatest evil of life, nor temperate who considers pleasure to be the highest good.

Toil, feel, think, hope. A man is sure to dream enough before he dies, without making arrangements for the purpose.

All earthly delights are sweeter in expectation than in enjoyment; all spiritual pleasures, more in fruition than expectation.

When worthy men fall out, only one of them may be faulty at first, but if strife continue long, commonly both become guilty.

Do not justify all your actions. Do not estimate the things as they touch you the nearest, and have not your eyes always fixed on self.

Thought and theory must precede all action that moves to salutary purposes. Yet action is nobler in itself than either thought or theory.

As a vessel is known by the sound whether it be cracked or not, so men are proved by their speeches whether they are wicked or innocent.

What a man knows should find its expression in what he does. The value of superior knowledge is chiefly in that it leads to a performing manhood.

It is very singular how death seems to give [illegible] a truer idea of a man's character, whether for good or evil, than they ever possessed while he lived among them.

Indolence is a delightful but distressing state. We must be doing something to be happy. Action is no less necessary than thought to the instinctive tendencies of the human frame.

"Improvement Has Been Wonderful."

A gentleman makes the following report of his wife's case: "Mrs. J's improvement has been wonderful since she commenced taking the Oxygen Treatment. Her digestion and appetite are good, and her strength very much restored, so much so that she has for the past month been going down a flight of [illegible] Treatise on Compound Oxygen [illegible] sent free. Drs. STARKEY & PALEN, 1109 and 1111 Girard St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Femininities.

A society without ladies would be a year without a spring.

Woman is more given to life of the heart, and man to life of the brain.

Trainers of trick dogs prefer males on account of their greater ability to learn.

Moralists have noticed that women are merrier, more changeable and more capricious than men.

Mrs. Collins, of Troy, N. Y., has been seriously poisoned by wearing scarlet-dyed stockings.

The ladies of St. Louis are opposed to the opening of beer gardens on Sunday. Does any one wonder at it?

More than 8,000 women are employed in railway offices in Austria. They receive salaries from $15 to $20 a month.

Matches wherein one party is all passion, and the other all indifference, will assimilate about as well as ice and fire.

A Missouri lady has just died from blood-poisoning, caused by the bite of a rat upon her foot while asleep, last July.

Several women from the United States, wives of Mexican capitalists and politicians, are leaders in City of Mexico society.

At a recent Cincinnati wedding one of the bridal presents displayed was a receipted bill for professional services from a physician.

The wife is the sun of the social system. Unless she attract, there is nothing to keep heavy bodies, like husbands, from flying off into space.

Some Washington ladies who have seen all the Presidents for the last thirty years, say that Millard Fillmore was the handsomest of the number.

The ladies of Montreal, Canada, have an association of their own for introducing female help from Europe. The Minister of Agriculture is aiding them.

Many girls would rather wear their stockings with holes in than have them darned, because when darned, they are men-ded, and girls prefer men alive.

Two girls at Greenwich, Eng., climbed five fences, wrenched off a lock, and plundered a house, lately. If this goes on, male burglars will have to strike.

A certain economical woman boasts that she has made one pair of stockings last fifteen years by simply knitting new feet to them every winter, and new legs every other winter.

A London female æsthetic on Mr. Irving [illegible] thus lately: "Mr. Irving's legs are [illegible]. Both are delicately intellectual, but his left leg is a poem."

Eight of the jurors who acquitted Belle [illegible] of murdering her husband at Glasburg, Ill., accepted her invitation to a banquet in celebration of her escape from the gallows.

There was nothing in the demeanor of Miss Musgrove, a bride at Lebanon, Ohio, to indicate that she was not overjoyed at getting Frazer for a husband, yet within a week she eloped with Thompson.

"Tommy," said a mother to her seven-year old boy, "you must not interrupt me when I am talking with ladies. You must wait till we stop, and then you can talk." "But you never stop," retorted the boy.

Mothers who force their daughters into interested marriages are worse than the Ammonites who sacrificed their children to Moloch—the latter undergoing a speedy death, the former suffering years of torture, but too frequently leading to the same result.

In speaking of a newly-wedded pair, a Geneva gentleman said of the husband: "The trouble with John is, he has no mind of his own." "Oh, that will make no difference," replied the old lady: "I'm sure Sallie will always be ready to give him a piece of her's."

At a recent wedding at St. George's, Hanover Square, in London, five out of six bridesmaids wore different colors. This novelty was slightly suggestive of a rainbow. One wore blue, another red, a third violet, and a fourth bronze. The two others wore cream color.

A few days since a young man was jailed in McMinnville, Tenn., for carrying a pistol. His sweetheart, a young lady residing in [illegible] county, heard of his troubles, and went to McMinnville, and by personal appeals induced citizens to go on his bond. She then married him, and the two departed for home.

A New York paper presents a beautiful vision of a fair debutante. There is the debut, the dance, the proposal, the love-making, the wedding, and the Russian P[illegible] but we miss the barber shop on the little side street in St. Petersburg, and the Prince's old mother hanging out the clothes to dry in the back alley.

A Boston lover recently gave an affectionate little squeeze of his lady love's arm. She gave an [illegible] of pain, which he thought was resentment. [illegible] was broken, she had been vaccinated in the arm. This will add to the arguments of a [illegible] London journalist, who insists that vaccination should not be upon the arm.

A conversation overheard the other day: She—"Did Sheridan or Knowles write 'The School for Scandal'?" He—"Why, Knowles, of course. Sheridan was a general in the army, you know, and never wrote anything. Don't you remember about his marching through Georgia?" She—"Oh, I remember now, but I always did get those men confused."

Fechter, the actor, used to tell a touching story of M[illegible] Mars during her last years. She came upon the stage one night to personate one of the roles she had made famous in her youth. When she appeared an [illegible] heartless wretch threw her a wreath of immortelles—as it were for her grave. She was shocked, drops stood on her brow, the rouge fell from her cheeks, and she stood motionless before the audience—a picture of age and misery. She could not continue her part.

News Notes.

Washington left more money than any President we ever had.

There are still on the rolls about 8,000 pensioners of the war of 1812.

The Mormon Church in Utah is arranging to send out 100 missionaries.

Large pokes with sugar-loaf crowns take precedence of other bonnets.

Silver imitation of old Roman coins are coming into favor as breastpins.

Thirty-eight kinds of wild fowl were served at a game dinner in Chicago.

Satin and plush muffs take the place of fur ones in all but the severest weather.

Tobacco smoke blown into the ear is occasionally used as a remedy for earache.

The highest speed made in cancelling letter stamps by hand has been 240 a minute.

Numbers of English barristers now wear moustaches. Quite a modern innovation this.

General Keifer is the first speaker of the House from Ohio. Pennsylvania has had three.

In Maine there are no open bars, but liquor can be freely had in all the prominent hotels.

A physician in the town of Sturgeon, Mo., makes his rounds in a buggy drawn by a pair of elks.

Muskrats are late in building their houses this year. Old settlers say this means an open winter.

A large boa in the Zoological Gardens in London swallowed a blanket, and disgorged it in [illegible]

California cowboys shoot at and hit pipes that strangers smoke. That is the way in which they have a little fun.

A Portsmouth, N. H., farmer wears an overcoat which is 42 years old, and is said to be still in good condition.

A herd of 11,000 sheep has just reached Nebraska from Washington Territory. They have been on the road two years.

A million of dollars of gold coin weighs 3685.71 pounds avoirdupois, and a million standard dollars in our silver coin weigh 58,928.57 pounds.

The Shah of Persia became captivated by the Princess of Wales while in England, and he every year offers the Prince a tempting purse in exchange for her.

Among the scholars of a public school in Woonsocket, R. I., is a man forty-six years of age, who attends regularly. But he will graduate in the [illegible]

The smallest editor in the country is said to be Geo. Sawyer, of the Key West Democrat, who is [illegible] inches tall, weighs thirty-five pounds, and is 25 years old.

At the first sale this season in Natal, Africa, of native grown ostrich feathers, three pounds and nine ounces of long white feathers brought one hundred dollars.

London has a population of four millions and a half, of this multitude only 60,000 are church members, and only 200,000 are regular attendants at religious services.

Twenty-five thousand people are employed in cigar-making in New York city, and 227,000,000 cigars and 230,000,000 cigarettes are manufactured there yearly.

At the sale of the Duke of Marlborough's Sunderland library, in London, recently, a Latin Bible, being the first Bible printed, with the date of 1462, sold for $[illegible].

It is thought that the Duke of Wellington introduced the uncomfortable practice of diners-out taking their hats into the drawing-room, which is soon to be abolished.

If anything could excuse a suicide it was in the case of a somewhat noted Californian, who killed himself on seeing what purported to be his portrait in an illustrated paper.

A pack of sixty hounds are kept by the Empress of Austria at her castle of Godollo, where they have a large sleeping-room, a bath-room, and a kitchen set apart for their use.

A St. Louis prayer-meeting was broken up by a Deputy-Sheriff, who levied on the church furniture for debt, after allowing "just one more hymn, and one prayer, if not too long."

A man in Eureka, Nev., has a curiosity in his store in the shape of a whisky-tippling mouse that comes up as regular for his liquor as the most veritable old toddy-tippler in town.

A Chicago clergyman knocked down the thief who was trying to steal his satchel, and the question whether the blow was justifiable in a preacher of Christianity may come before his Presbytery.

A little English school-girl recently died in convulsions caused by fright, and this fatal terror was inspired by reading the prophecy which Mother Shipton did not make, to the effect that the world would come to an end during this year of grace.

The largest steam boiler in the world was recently finished at Weisenthal, Baden. The proprietor of the works gave his workmen a lunch inside the boiler, which was brilliantly lighted up, and in which there was a staging with a table set for thirty people.

Wine is now made from oranges in Southern California. It is said to be amber-colored, and to taste like dry hock, with an orange aroma. It, however, requires the addition of spirits to make it at all like wine, and is better for vinegar than for a beverage.

A World of Good.

One of the most popular medicines now before the American public is Hop Bitters. You see it everywhere. People take it with good effect. It builds them up. It is not so pleasant to the taste as some other Bitters, as it is not a whisky drink; it is more like the old-fashioned boneset tea, that has done a world of good. If you don't feel just right, try Hop Bitters.—Nunda News.

HEALTH IS WEALTH.

HEALTH OF BODY IS WEALTH OF MIND.

RADWAY'S

SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.

Pure blood makes sound flesh, strong bone and a clear skin. If you would have your flesh firm, your bones sound without caries, and your complexion fair use RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.

A remedy composed of ingredients of extraordinary medical properties essential to purify, heal, repair and invigorate the broken-down and wasted body—QUICK, PLEASANT, SAFE and PERMANENT in its treatment and cure.

No matter by what name the complaint may be designated, whether it be Scrofula, Consumption, Syphilis, Ulcers, Sores, Tumors, Boils, Erysipelas, or Salt Rheum, diseases of the Lungs, Kidneys, Bladder, Womb, Skin, Liver, Stomach, or Bowels, either chronic or constitutional, the virus of the disease is in the BLOOD which supplies the waste, and builds and repairs these organs and wasted tissues of the system. If the blood is unhealthy, the process of repair must be unsound.

The Sarsaparillian Resolvent not only is a compensating remedy, but secures the harmonious action of each of the organs. It establishes throughout the entire system functional harmony, and supplies the blood vessels with a pure and healthy current of new life. The skin after a few days use of the Sarsaparillian becomes clear and beautiful. Pimples, Blotches, Black Spots, and Skin Eruptions are removed; Sores and Ulcers soon cured. Persons suffering from Scrofula, Eruptive Diseases of the Eyes, Mouth, Ears, Legs, Throat and Glands that have accumulated and spread, either from uncured diseases or mercury, or from the use of Corrosive Sublimate, may rely upon a cure if the Sarsaparillian is continued a sufficient time to make its impression on the system.

One bottle contains more of the active principles of medicines than any other preparation. Taken in Teaspoonful Doses, while others require five or six times as much. One Dollar Per Bottle.

R. R. R.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

THE CHEAPEST AND BEST MEDICINE FOR FAMILY USE IN THE WORLD.

ONE 50 CENT BOTTLE

WILL CURE MORE COMPLAINTS AND PREPARE THE SYSTEM AGAINST SUDDEN ATTACKS OF EPIDEMICS AND CONTAGIOUS DISEASES THAN ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS EXPENDED FOR OTHER MEDICINES OR MEDICAL ATTENDANCE.

THE MOMENT RADWAY'S READY RELIEF IS APPLIED EXTERNALLY—OR TAKEN INTERNALLY ACCORDING TO DIRECTIONS—PAIN, FROM WHATEVER CAUSE, CEASES TO EXIST.

In all cases where pain or discomfort is experienced, or if seized with Influenza, Diphtheria, Sore Throat, Mumps, Bad Coughs, Hoarseness, Bilious Colic, Inflammation of the Bowels, Stomach, Lungs, Liver, Kidneys; or with Croup, Quinsy, Fever and Ague; or with Neuralgia, Headache, Tic Doloreux, Toothache, Earache, Nervousness, Sleeplessness, or with Lumbago, Pain in the Back or Rheumatism; or with Diarrhœa, Cholera Morbus, or Dysentery; or with Burns, Scalds or Bruises, or Chilblains, Frost Bites; or with Strains, Cramps or Spasms, the application of RADWAY'S READY RELIEF will cure you of the worst of these complaints in a few hours.

RADWAY'S REGULATING PILLS.

Perfect Purgative, Soothing Aperient, Act Without Pain, Always Reliable, and Natural in Their Operations.

A VEGETABLE SUBSTITUTE FOR CALOMEL.

Perfectly Tasteless, elegantly coated with sweet gum, purge, regulate, purify, cleanse and strengthen. RADWAY'S PILLS, for the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Headache, Constipation, Costiveness, Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Biliousness, Fever, Inflammation of the Bowels, Piles, and all derangements of the Internal Viscera. Warranted to effect a perfect cure. Purely vegetable, containing no mercury, minerals or deleterious drugs.

☞ Observe the following symptoms resulting from Diseases of the Digestive Organs: Constipation, Inward Piles, Fullness of the Blood in the Head, Acidity of the Stomach, Nausea, Heartburn, Disgust of Food, Fullness or Weight in the Stomach, Sour Eructations, Sinking or Fluttering at the Heart, Choking or Suffocating Sensations when in a lying posture, Dimness of Vision, Dots or Webs before the Sight, Fever and Dull Pain in the Head, Deficiency of Perspiration, Yellowness of the Skin and Eyes, Pain in the Side, Chest, Limbs, and sudden Flushes of Heat, Burning in the Flesh.

A few doses of RADWAY'S PILLS will free the system of all the above-named disorders.

Price, 25 Cents Per Box.

We repeat that the reader must consult our books and papers on the subject of diseases and their cure, among which may be named:

"False and True,"

"Radway on Irritable Urethra,"

"Radway on Scrofula."

and others relating to different classes of Diseases.

SOLD BY DRUGGISTS.

READ "FALSE AND TRUE."

Send a letter stamp to RADWAY & CO., No. 32 Warren Street, New York.

☞ Information worth thousands will be sent to you.

TO THE PUBLIC.

There can be no better guarantee of the value of DR. RADWAY'S old established R. R. R. REMEDIES than the base and worthless imitations of them, as there are False Resolvents, Reliefs and Pills. Be sure and ask for Radway's, and see that the name "Radway" is on what you buy.

NERVOUS·DEBILITY

Vital Weakness and Prostration from overwork or other causes, is radically and promptly cured by

HUMPHREYS' HOMEOPATHIC SPECIFIC No. 28.

Been in use 30 years, and is the most successful remedy known. Price $1 per vial, or 5 vials and large vial of powder for $5, sent post free on receipt of price.

Humphreys' Homeopathic Medicine Co.,
109 Fulton Street, New York.

We manufacture on the premises for Builders and others, fine Marbleized

SLATE MANTELS,

$[illegible], $[illegible] Upwards. A Single Mantel at Wholesale Price.

Illustrated Catalogue Free if you mention "Saturday Evening Post." *WRITE AT ONCE.*

PENN MANTEL WORKS,
10 Market Street, Camden, N. J.

Humorous.

Army literature—Magazines and reviews.

Earthquakes are always of the shaker persuasion.

Why is a cook like a barber? Because he dresses hare.

A bad fix—Repairing a broken window with an old hat.

A clerical error—A minister kissing a parishioner's wife.

Which side of the horse is the easiest to get on? The outside.

A poor excuse is better than none, and the same may be said of a dinner.

There is one town in Connecticut that has no fear of measles. It's Haddam.

The man who knows you well may forget all about you when you are ill.

"Be moderate in all things," as the boy said to the schoolmaster when whipping him.

Who can be more fully the creature of the ups and downs of life than the elevator boy?

◆

The Triumph of Genius.

No man in this country can hope to achieve permanent success on any other basis than that of merit. Ephemeral popularity may, for a season, crown the efforts of the charlatan or the empiric, but sooner or later fraud will be unmasked and a deceived public awake from its delusion. The introduction of any really valuable appliance, either for the comfort or enjoyment of mankind, is always attended with embarrassments which can only be surmounted by genius and meritorious enterprise. Ungenerous rivals will resort to every artifice, employ every subterfuge, to circumvent the laudable efforts of inventive skill. Hence, he whose cultured humanity seeks to distribute among the humbler classes sources of pleasure and happiness once within the attainment of the wealthy only, must anticipate opposition, both bitter and ungenerous. Manufacturers who have long enjoyed a monopoly as grasping as unscrupulous, will regard with unfeigned malevolence, and indignantly denounce any man who dares reveal their abuses or expose their impositions upon a too credulous public. The Hon. Daniel F. Beatty is a felicitous illustration of the triumph which genius and merit combined can achieve. Difficulties cannot intimidate him, and embarrassments beneath which most men would hopelessly succumb, vanish at his touch, and seem but to stimulate his undaunted energies. In September, last, a calamitous fire laid waste the accumulation of years of enterprise and industry; but ere the embers of its destruction had cooled, plans and specifications for the erection of a new manufactory were prepared. Sixty days had not expired when, Phœnix-like, his present magnificent establishment rose from the ashes of its predecessor. From the fact that the manufactory is so extensive, occupying within the walls nearly four acres, and possessing labor-saving woodworking machinery of each variety and excellence, with facilities so complete, no organ-builder in this country can compete with Mr. Beatty either in the rapid construction of his instruments or their cheapness in price. In vain have arrogant monopolists sought to accomplish his overthrow. His integrity is a bulwark against which their envenomed shafts fall hurtless, and to-day his name is a synonym of mercantile honor. No man ever accuses him of concealing defects or claiming unworthy advantages. In the manufacture of his organs he has attained an excellence and superiority which his competitors have sought in vain to rival. For beauty of design, grand variety of musical effects and durability he stands alone. The "Mozart," the *chef d'œuvre* of his creative genius, challenges the admiration of all who can appreciate the finest musical combination and the most wonderful instrument ever presented to the American people. A careful perusal of the advertisement of Mr. Beatty cannot but prove of interest and advantage to all who desire a beautiful organ at a price unparalleled in view of its superiority and excellence.

◆

Why Are You Bilious?

Because you have allowed your bowels to become costive, and liver torpid. Use Kidney-Wort to produce a free state of the bowels, and it will stimulate the liver to proper action, cleanse the skin of its yellowness, cure bilious headache, and cause new life in the blood. Druggists have it, both dry and liquid. —Zion's Herald.

◆

DON'T miss the Boston 99c. Store, 49 North 8th st., for your Holiday Goods. They are wonderful.

◆

AN ONLY DAUGHTER CURED OF CONSUMPTION.

When death was hourly expected all remedies having failed, and Dr. H. JAMES was experimenting with the many herbs of Calcutta, he accidentally made a preparation which cured his only child of CONSUMPTION. His child is now in this country enjoying the best of health. He has proved to the world that CONSUMPTION can be positively and permanently cured. The Doctor now gives this Recipe free, only asking two three-cent stamps to pay expenses. This herb also cures night-sweats, nausea at the stomach, and will break up a fresh cold in twenty-four hours. Address, CRADDOCK & CO., 1032 Race street, Philadelphia, naming this paper.

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Important.

When you visit or leave New York City, save Baggage Expressage and Carriage Hire, stop at GRAND UNION HOTEL, opposite Grand Central Depot. 450 elegant rooms, fitted up at a cost of one million dollars, reduced to $1 and upwards per day. European Plan. Elevator. Restaurant supplied with the best. Horse-cars, stages, and elevated railroads to all depots. Families can live better for less money at the Grand Union Hotel than at any other first-class hotel in the city.

◆

Old Gold Bought.—Silver and Platinum of all kinds. Full value paid. J. L. Clark, Reliable Refiner of all Residues containing gold or silver. 823 Filbert St., Philadelphia, Pa. Send by mail or express. Mention THE POST.

◆

PEARL'S White Glycerine cures sunburn and prickly heat and makes the skin soft and smooth. Use Pearl's White Glycerine Toilet Soap.

◆

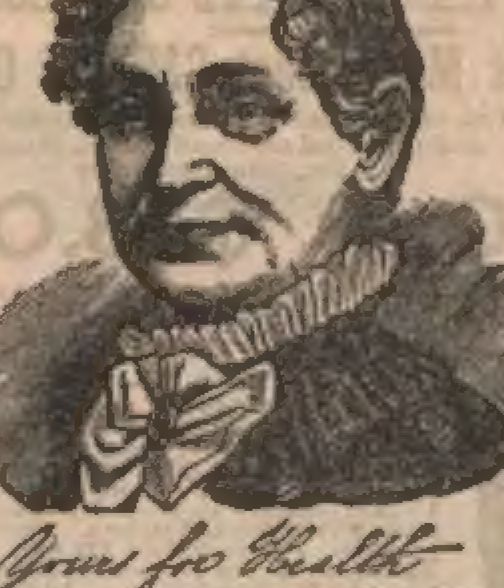
FAY'S Building Materials for Roofs, walls, and Ceilings in place of Plaster. Samples free. Camden, N. J.

Phonography, or Phonetic Shorthand.

Catalogue of works, with Phonographic alphabet and illustrations, for beginners, sent on application. Address BENN PITMAN, Cincinnati, O.

MRS. LYDIA E. PINKHAM, OF LYNN, MASS.,

Woman can Sympathize with Woman.



Health of Woman is the Hope of the Race.

Yours for Health
Lydia E. Pinkham

LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S VEGETABLE COMPOUND.

Is a Positive Cure

for all those Painful Complaints and Weaknesses so common to our best female population.

It will cure entirely the worst form of Female Complaints, all ovarian troubles, Inflammation and Ulceration, Falling and Displacements, and the consequent Spinal Weakness, and is particularly adapted to the Change of Life.

It will dissolve and expel tumors from the uterus in an early stage of development. The tendency to cancerous humors there is checked very speedily by its use.

It removes faintness, flatulency, destroys all craving for stimulants, and relieves weakness of the stomach. It cures Bloating, Headaches, Nervous Prostration, General Debility, Sleeplessness, Depression and Indigestion.

That feeling of bearing down, causing pain, weight and backache, is always permanently cured by its use.

It will at all times and under all circumstances act in harmony with the laws that govern the female system.

For the cure of Kidney Complaints of either sex this Compound is unsurpassed.

LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S VEGETABLE COMPOUND is prepared at 233 and 235 Western Avenue, Lynn, Mass. Price $1. Six bottles for $5. Sent by mail in the form of pills, also in the form of lozenges, on receipt of price, $1 per box for either. Mrs. Pinkham freely answers all letters of inquiry. Send for pamphlet. Address as above. *Mention this Paper.*

No family should be without LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S LIVER PILLS. They cure constipation, biliousness, and torpidity of the liver. 25 cents per box.

☞ Sold by all Druggists. ☜

KIDNEY-WORT

ACTS AT THE SAME TIME ON

FOR THE PERMANENT CURE OF CONSTIPATION.

No other disease is so prevalent in this country as Constipation, and no remedy has ever equalled the celebrated Kidney-Wort as a cure. Whatever the cause, however obstinate the case, proper use of this remedy will overcome it.

PILES. THIS distressing complaint is very apt to be complicated with constipation. Kidney-Wort strengthens the weakened parts and quickly cures all kinds of Piles even when physicians and medicines have before failed.

☞ If you have either of these troubles

PRICE $1. USE Druggists Sell

KIDNEY-WORT

KIDNEYS, LIVER AND BOWELS.

TWO DOLLARS.

A NEW DEPARTURE

FOR

DEMOREST'S Illustrated Monthly MAGAZINE

The Largest in Form! The Largest in Circulation!

and the best in everything that makes a magazine desirable. Demorest's Monthly Magazine presents a grand combination of the entertaining, the useful, and beautiful, with Stories, Essays, Poems, Fashions, Family Matters, Art Critiques, Lovely Oil Pictures, Steel Engravings, and other Art Features.

Send Twenty Cents for a Specimen Copy, or subscribe six months on trial for **One Dollar.**

TWO DOLLARS A YEAR.

There is no publication so cheap or so good in the world. For circular or full particulars address

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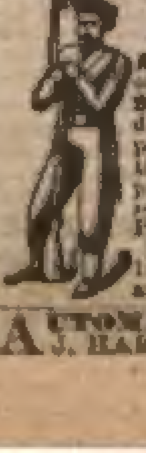
17 East 14th Street, New York

☞ Volume 18 commences with November, 1881. Secure the superb number for January, with the Steel Engravings of Jersey, and how to decorate your houses for Christmas.

Catarrh.

Rev. T. P. Childs, Troy, Ohio has the only known means of Permanent Cure for this loathsome disease. A full Statement of his method sent free. CURE yourself at HOME. No charge for consultation by mail. Address

REV. T. P. CHILDS TROY, OHIO

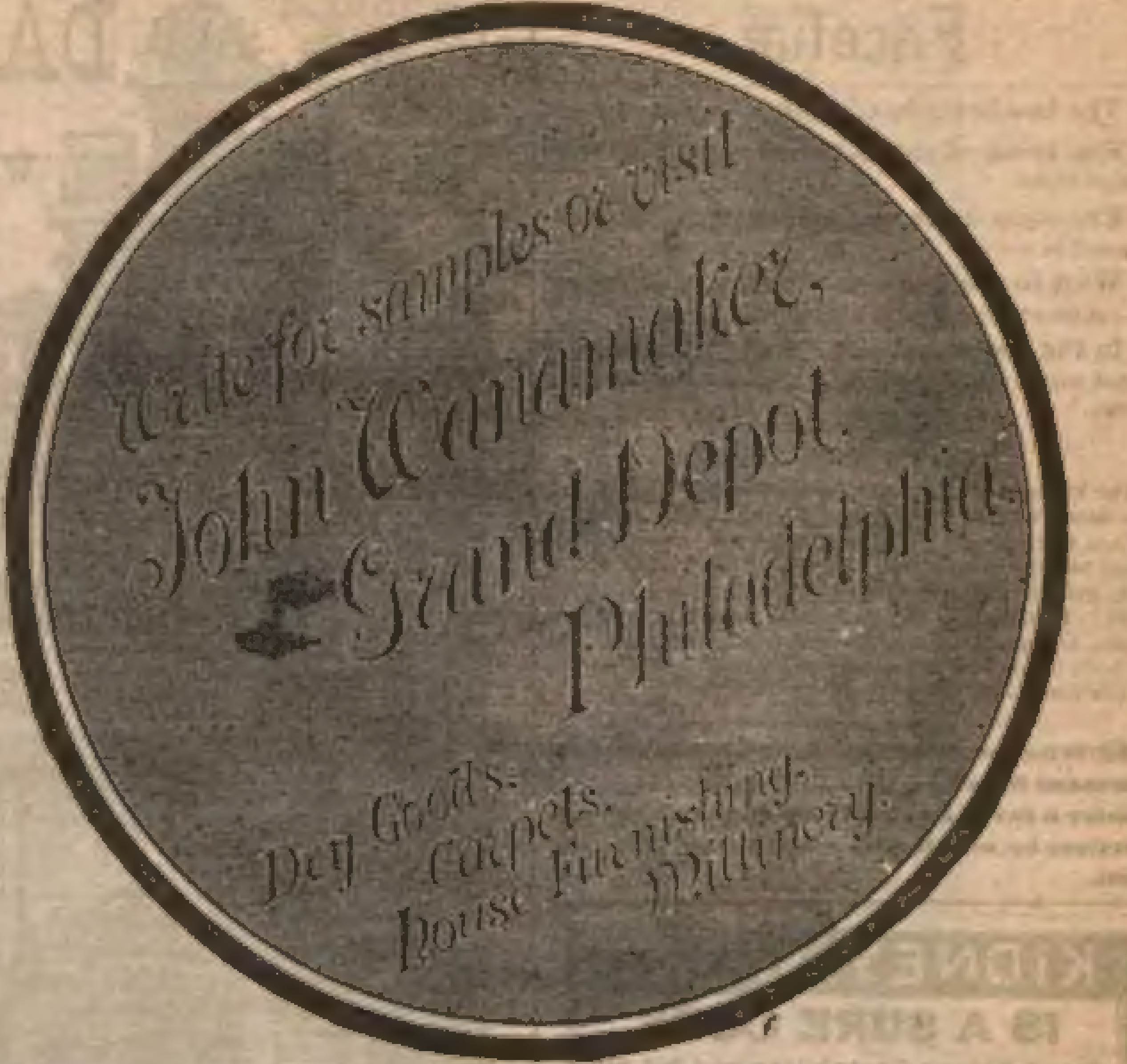


PENSIONS.

ARE PAID every soldier disabled by accident or otherwise. A WOUND of any kind, loss of finger, toe or eye, RUPTURE, if but slight; diseases of Lungs or Varicose Veins give a pension. Under new law thousands are entitled to an increase of pension. Widows, orphans and dependent fathers or mothers of soldiers get a pension. Send 2 stamps for copy Pension and Bounty Acts. Address,

P. H. Fitzgerald & Co., Claim Agents, Indianapolis, Ind. Refer to Ind. Banking Co. and [illegible] Central Bank, both of Indianapolis.

AUTOMATIC ORGANS, ONLY $5.00. THEO. J. HARBACH, 809 Filbert St., Phila., Pa.



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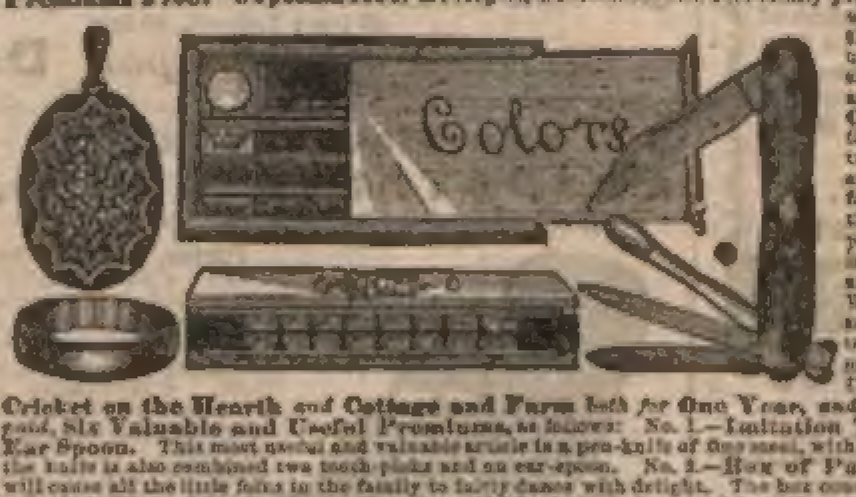
John Wanamaker,
Grand Depot.
Philadelphia.

Dry Goods.
Carpets.
House Furnishing.
Millinery.

An Honest Advertisement!!—An Unparalleled Offer!!

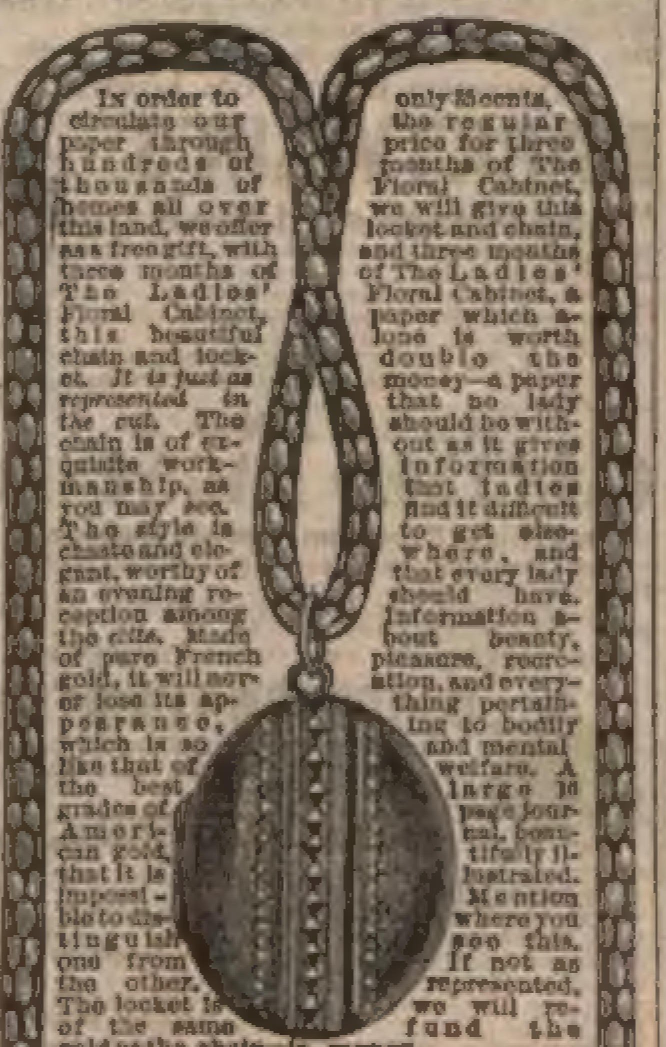
A Splendid Story Paper, and a Valuable Agricultural Paper, Both One Year for One Dollar, and Six Useful Premiums Free! We publish two of the largest, handsomest and best family papers in the United States—papers widely known and universally admired. The first is **The Cricket on the Hearth,** a large and handsome 16-page, 64-column *illustrated* paper, filled with the finest serial and short stories, sketches, poems, useful knowledge, wit and humor, games, puzzles, etc. The second is **Cottage and Farm,** a valuable 8-page, 32-column illustrated paper, devoted to Agriculture, Horticulture, household notes and recipes, ladies' fancy work, stories, poems, news, etc. The regular price of the former is $1.00 per year, and of the latter 50 cents, and they are positively the best home and family papers published for the price. Notwithstanding the already large circulation of these popular periodicals, we are ambitious to still further enlarge their popularity. We wish to obtain for them, immediately, 100,000 new subscribers; hence we make the following grand extraordinary offer—the greatest and most liberal ever made by a reliable publishing house! *Read this:* Upon receipt of only **One Dollar** we will send **The**



Cricket on the Hearth *and* **Cottage and Farm** both *for* **One Year,** and to every subscriber we will send, **Free and postpaid, Six Valuable and Useful Premiums,** as follows: No. 1.—**Imitation Tortoise Shell Pen-Knife, Tooth-Pick, and Ear Spoon.** This most useful and valuable article is a pen-knife of fine steel, with handle of handsome imitation tortoise-shell; with the knife is also combined two tooth-picks and an ear-spoon. No. 2.—**Box of Paints or Water Colors.** Here is something that will cause all the little folks in the family to fairly dance with delight. The box consists of eighteen colors, with brush and cups. No. 3.—**Lady's Malachite Locket.** These beautiful Lockets are imported from Europe, where they are extremely popular. The face is beautifully enameled, and composed of many colors, harmoniously blended. At the back is a space to contain a portrait. No. 4.—**Ladies' or Gentlemen's Plain Gold-Plated Ring.** This ring is of a good quality of gold plate, and will therefore wear well and give excellent satisfaction. It is a plain gold-plated ring, suitable for either lady or gentleman. No. 5.—**Imported German Harmonica,** 16 holes. The harmonica is a musical instrument very easily learned—almost any child can play upon it with a few hours practice. No. 6.—**"The Most Laughable Thing on Earth."** This is one of the merriest household games ever invented. It provokes roars of laughter wherever played. Remember, we send, packed in a box, all the above named premiums to every one who sends one dollar for a year's subscription to THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH and COTTAGE AND FARM. In addition to this, we shall place in one premium box in every 25 a Special Grand Prize of a *Solid Gold Parisian Diamond Ring;* in one box in every 10 a Special Grand Prize of a *Pair of Parisian Diamond Ear Drops,* rolled gold settings; and in one box in every 5 a Special Grand Prize of a *Parisian Diamond Stud,* rolled gold setting. Every subscriber receives the two papers one year and six premiums for one dollar, and 34 subscribers out of every 100 will receive one of the Special Grand Prizes. This is the greatest and most liberal offer ever made by a reliable publishing house, and is a rare opportunity to secure an immense amount of good reading and a large collection of *splendid* premiums for a very little money. Our premiums are all warranted first-class, genuine and valuable articles. We make this great offer to introduce our papers into new homes; the subscribers we obtain this year we hope to retain for many years to come; hence we cannot afford to treat you unfairly. *Perfect satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded.* We refer, as to our reliability, to any newspaper published in New York, as we are well-known. Send at once and get this extraordinary bargain. If you will show this advertisement and get up a club of five, we will send you the two papers for one year and the premiums free! Address, **S. H. MOORE, Publisher, No. 6 Park Place, New York.**

A GIFT TO YOU.

35c. 35c. 35c. 35c. 35c. 35c.



IN order to circulate our paper through hundreds of thousands of homes all over this land, we offer as a free gift, with three months of The Ladies' Floral Cabinet, this beautiful chain and locket. *It is just as represented* in the cut. The chain is of exquisite workmanship, as you may see. The style is chaste and elegant, worthy of an evening reception among the elite. Made of pure French gold, it will never lose its appearance, which is so like that of the best grades of American gold, that it is impossible to distinguish one from the other. The locket is of the same gold as the chain—a very handsome one, with places with clear crystals for two portraits. Remember for only 35 cents, the regular price for three months of The Floral Cabinet, we will give this locket and chain, and three months of The Ladies' Floral Cabinet, a paper which alone is worth double the money—a paper that no lady should be without as it gives information that ladies find it difficult to get elsewhere, and that every lady should have. Information about beauty, pleasure, recreation, and everything pertaining to bodily and mental welfare. A large 16 page journal, beautifully illustrated. Mention where you see this. If not as represented, we will refund the money.

Address ADAMS & BISHOP, Publishers, 46 Beekman St., N. Y. Box [illegible].

WHITE
Gives a Permanently BEAUTIFUL Complexion.
GLYCERINE

PEARL'S WHITE GLYCERINE penetrates the skin without injury, eradicates all Spots, Impurities and Discolorations, either within or upon the skin, leaving it smooth, soft, pliable. For Sunburn, Prickly Heat, Chapped, Rough or Chafed Skin, it is the best thing in the world. TRY Pearl's White Glycerine Soap, 3 cakes by mail 50c. Pearl's White Glycerine Co. Prop's Jersey City, N. J. Sold by all Druggists.

WANTED—Agents for "Lives of the Presidents," by John S. C. Abbott & Co. Conwell, complete in one vol. Washington to Arthur—steel portraits; just the work to follow the canvass for Garfield. Address B. B. RUSSELL, Boston, Mass.

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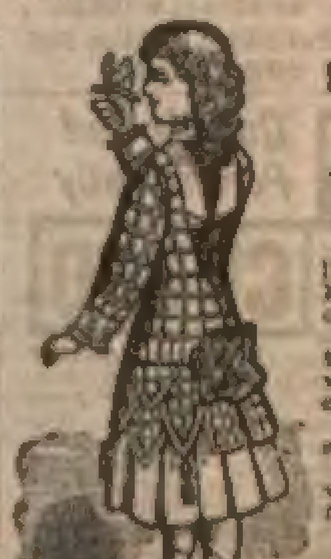
70 ALL NEW STYLE CHROMO Cards, beautiful designs, name on 10c. handsomest pack ever sold, 50 Elegant new designs, with name 10c. or 25 Extra large Chromos 10c. Garden Printing Co. Northford Ct.

FOR THE

LITTLE GIRLS.

New Style



DOLLS!

Eight inches tall, with lifelike, beautiful features, banged hair and dark eyes, or curls and blue eyes.

Ten cents each, two for fifteen cents, or one dozen 75c., which *includes dresses* with each doll. Mailed free.

Toy-dealers and storekeepers send for price-lists.

A lady in Tipton, Iowa, writes that she sold twenty-five the first afternoon.

Postage-stamps taken.

HOPE M'F'G CO.,
Providence, R. I.

AGENTS WANTED.—A Rare Chance to make money rapidly, selling our New Book;

New York by Sunlight and Gaslight.

Showing up the New York of *to-day*, with its palaces, its crowded thoroughfares, its rushing elevated trains, its countless sights, its romance, its mystery, its dark crimes and terrible tragedies, its charities, and in fact, every phase of life in the great city. Don't waste time selling slow books, but send for circulars giving full table of contents, terms to agents, etc. Prospectus now ready, and territory in great demand.

Address DOUGLAS BROS.,
53 North Seventh St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Mention this paper.

BRANSON KNITTER

For Manufacturing or Family Use.

Either with or without steam power. Over 1,000 in use, and acknowledged to be all that is claimed for it, and without a rival. Makes seamless hose of all sizes, double heel and toe. Will not get out of order, and girls and boys 10 to 15 years old operate them. For full particulars address,

J. L. BRANSON,
505 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa.
Or 24 West Fourth St., Cincinnati, Ohio.

OPIUM

And Morphine Habit, can be cured in from 10 to 30 days—no pay till cured. Established 10 years, 1,000 cured. Refer to patients in all parts of the country. **Dr. F. E. Marsh, Box 176, Quincy, Mich.**

Patents, Trade Marks, Etc.,

obtained by CHAS. A. RUTTER, 423 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa

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50 LARGE HANDSOME CHROMO CARDS, name on 10c. New & Artistic designs, acknowledged best pack sold. Album of Samples 25c. F. W. Austin, Fair Haven, Ct.

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40 Large Chromo Cards, no 2 alike, with name, 10c. Postpaid. G. I. REED & CO., Nassau, N. Y.

Facetiæ.

The butcher plays for high steaks.

The break of day was not caused by the fall of night.

Eve started the effigy business—she first dressed in F-I-G.

Wart to the knife, as the man said when he cut the excrescence on his thumb.

In the voyage of life every man is provided with a skull, with which to paddle his own canoe.

* * *

Nature's Sluice-Way.

The kidneys are Nature's sluice-way to wash out the debris of our constantly changing bodies. If they do not work properly the trouble is felt everywhere. Then be wise, and as soon as you see signs of disorder, get a package of Kidney-Wort and take it faithfully. It will clean the sluice-way of sand, gravel or slime, and purify the whole system. Druggists sell it, both liquid and dry, and it is equally efficient in either form.—Independent.

* * *

☞ When our readers answer any Advertisement found in these columns they will confer a favor on the Publisher and the advertiser by naming the Saturday Evening Post.

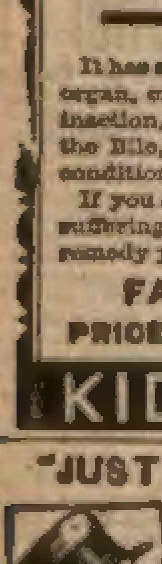
KIDNEY-WORT
IS A SURE CURE
for all Kidney Complaints and for all diseases of the
—LIVER.—

It has specific action on this most important organ, enabling it to throw off torpidity and inaction, stimulating the healthy secretion of the Bile, and by keeping the bowels in free condition, effecting its regular discharge.

If you are bilious, dyspeptic, constipated, or suffering from malaria, Kidney-Wort is the remedy you need.

FAIL NOT TO TRY IT.
PRICE $1. SOLD BY DRUGGISTS.
KIDNEY-WORT

"JUST LET ME SHOW YOU"



DR. FOOTE'S
Hand-Book of Health Hints
AND READY RECIPES.
Worth $25. Cost 25c.
By the author of
"PLAIN HOME TALK" AND "MEDICAL COMMON SENSE."

128 PAGES of Advice about Daily Habits and Recipes for Cure of Common Ailments; a valuable Book of Reference for every Family. Only 25 cents.

The Handbook contains chapters on Hygiene for all seasons, Common Sense on Common Ills, Hygienic Curative Measures, How to Avoid Undesirable Children, Knacks Worth Knowing, Hints on Bathing, on Nursing the Sick, on Emergencies, Hints for Pregnant Women, together with some of the Private Formulæ of Dr. Foote, and other physicians of high repute, and directions for preparing food for invalids. ☞AGENTS WANTED.

Murray Hill Publishing Co., Box 788.
NEW YORK CITY.

ASTHMA Quickly and Permanently CURED

Dr. Stinson's Asthma Remedy is unequaled as a positive Alterative and Cure for Asthma and Dyspepsia, and all their attendant evils. It does not merely afford temporary relief, but is a permanent cure. Mrs. B. F. Lee, of Belmore, O., says of it: "*I am surprised at the speedy effects of your remedy. It is the first medicine in six years that has loosened my cough and made expectoration easy. I now sleep all night without coughing.*" If your druggist does not keep it, send for treatise and testimonials to

H. P. K. PECK & CO.,
853 Broadway, New York.

HOPE FOR THE DEAF
Dr. Peck's Artificial Ear Drums
PERFECTLY RESTORE THE HEARING and perform the work of the Natural Drum. Always in position, but invisible to others. All Conversation and even whispers heard distinctly. We refer to those using them. *Send for descriptive circular with testimonials.* Address, H. P. K. PECK & CO., 853 Broadway, New York.

FARMERS, Engineers, Mechanics, Mill Owners, Miners, Merchants, &c., will find in MOORE'S UNIVERSAL ASSISTANT AND COMPLETE MECHANIC, a work containing 1016 pages, 500 Engravings, 461 Tables, and over 1,000,000 Industrial Facts, Calculations, Processes, Secrets, Rules, &c., of rare utility in 200 Trades. A $5 book free by mail for $2.50, worth its weight in gold to any Mechanic, Farmer or Business Man. *Agents Wanted.* Sure sale everywhere for all time. For Ill. Contents Pamphlet, terms, and Catalogue of 500 fast selling Books, address NATIONAL BOOK CO., 73 Beekman St., New York.

CONSUMPTION.

I have a positive remedy for the above disease; by its use thousands of cases of the worst kind and of long standing have been cured. Indeed, so strong is my faith in its efficacy that I will send TWO BOTTLES *free*, together with a VALUABLE TREATISE on this disease to any sufferer. Give Express and P. O. address. DR. T. A. SLOCUM, 181 Pearl St., New York.

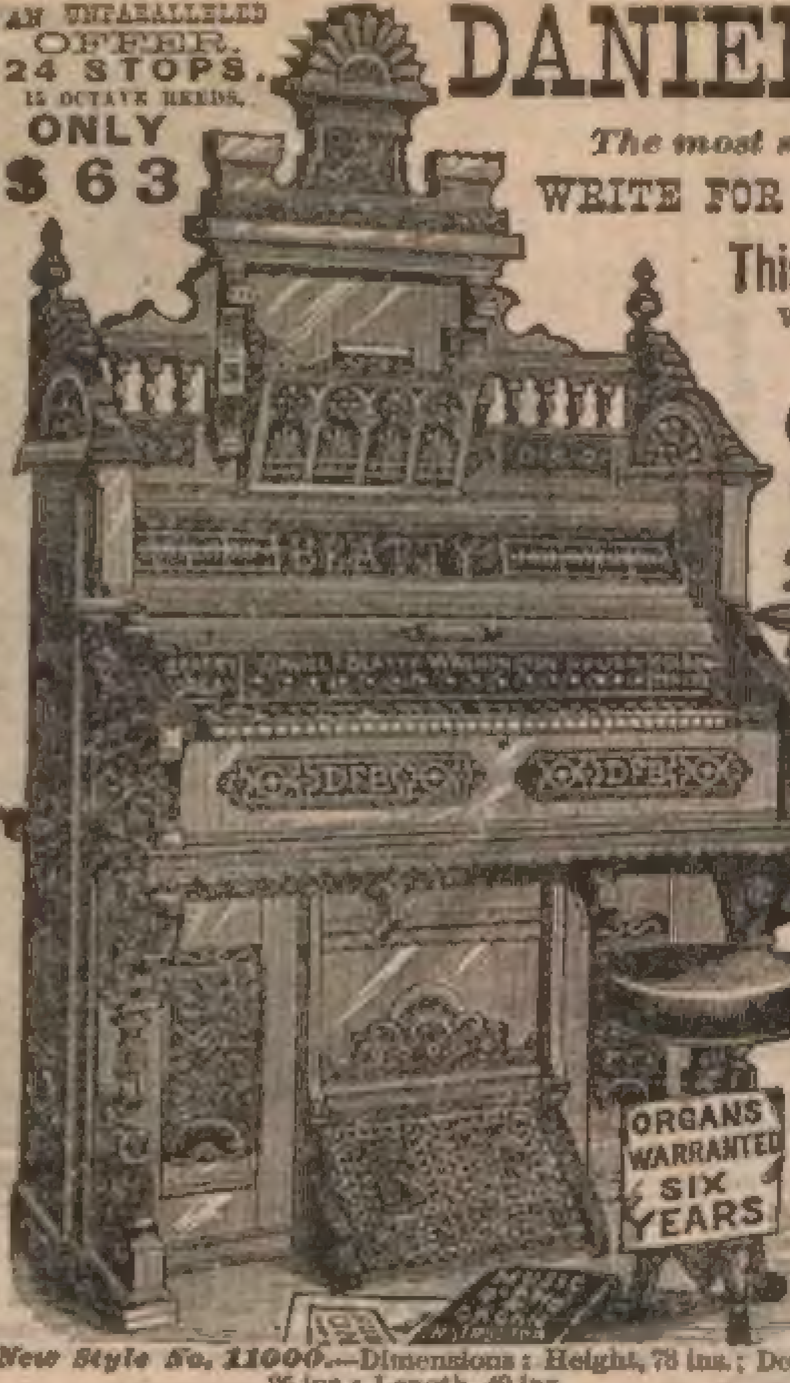
$20 IN GOODS SENT FREE

Any one sending me the P. O. address of Fifteen persons, that might like steady employment, will receive, by mail, goods that retail at $20. This may prove your stepping-stone to a fortune. Do not miss this splendid chance. Address M. YOUNG, 173 Greenwich St., N. Y.

Edith M. Hall. Copper Name Stamp with ink and pad sent for $1.00. The same made of rubber for 60 cts. Send 3c. stamp for circulars of Postmasters complete set, and Stamps, etc., of all kinds. J. Goldsborough, 731 Chestnut St., Phila.

Agents wanted. $5 a Day made selling our NEW HOUSEHOLD ARTICLES and FAMILY SCALE. Weighs up to 25 lbs. Sells at $1.50. DOMESTIC SCALE CO., Cincinnati, O.

AN UNPARALLELED OFFER.
24 STOPS.
12 OCTAVE REEDS.
ONLY
$63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D.F.B.
D.F.B.
ORGANS WARRANTED SIX YEARS

New Style No. 11000.—Dimensions: Height, 78 ins.; Depth, 26 ins.; Length, 49 ins.

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The most successful house in the World.
WRITE FOR ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE.

This Magnificent CABINET Organ
With an elegant Stool, Book and Music, boxed and delivered on board cars at Washington, New Jersey, for
Only $63.00
Satisfaction absolutely guaranteed or money refunded after one year's use.

24 STOPS.
SPECIFICATIONS, as follows:
1 Cello, 8 ft. tone. 2 Melodia, 8 ft. tone. 3 Clarabella, 8 ft. tone. 4 Manual Sub-Bass, 16 ft. 5 Bourdon, 16 ft. tone. 6 Saxaphone 8 ft. tone. 7 Viol di Gamba, 8 ft. tone. 8 Diapason, 8 ft. tone. 9 Viola Dolce, 4 ft. tone. 10 Grand Expressione. 11 French Horn, 8 ft. tone. 12 Harp Æolienne. 13 Vox Humana. 14 Echo, 8 ft. tone. 15 Dulciana, 8 ft. tone. 16 Clarionet, 8 ft. tone. 17 Voix Celeste, 8 ft. tone. 18 Violina, 4 ft. 19 Vox Jubilante, 8 ft. 20 Piccolo, 4 ft. 21 Coupler Harmonique. 22 Orchestral Forte. 23 Grand Organ Knee Stop. 24 Right Organ Knee Stop.

BEWARE! Do not think of buying an Organ that does not contain an Octave Coupler, a stop which doubles the power of the instrument. All of my Organs have it. This Organ is a triumph of the Organ Builder's art. **It is very beautiful in appearance, being exactly like the above cut.** The case is of solid Walnut, profusely ornamented with hand carving and expensive fancy veneers. The music pocket is of the most beautiful design extant. It has the best rubber Upright Bellows, with steel springs, rollers for moving, polished metal pedals, and handles, etc., etc. It is deserving of a place in the millionaire's parlor, and would ornament the boudoir of a princess.

REMIT by Money Order, Express Prepaid, Bank Draft, or Registered Letters. Money refunded and all freight charges paid if not as represented. ☞Come to Washington, New Jersey, and see Factory (3 acres of space within walls of buildings) and select in person. Elegant carriage for visitors meets all trains.

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☞I want it distinctly understood that I am prepared to offer to the public greater inducements to buy PIANOFORTES FOR HOLIDAY PRESENTS than ever before. Why buy Grand, Square and Upright Pianos and pay manufacturers such enormous profits. Before you decide to purchase a Piano elsewhere, stop! Write at once for valuable information. Tricks of the trade. Where the cost comes in; how a $297.50 Piano cost $1000 through agents—profits of from $500 to $700 made on a single sale. A $1000 Piano sold to one man for $700, to his neighbor, the same Piano precisely, for $850, to another for $650. *Is this just?* I have one price, no agents, sales are made direct, my catalogue has no fictitious prices—ONE PRICE TO ALL.

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ADJUSTABLE CHAIR,
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From Am. Journal of Medicine.

Dr. Ab. Meserole (late of London) who makes a specialty of Epilepsy, has without doubt treated and cured more cases than any other living physician; his success has simply been astonishing; we have heard of cases of over 20 years' standing, successfully cured by him; he has published a work on this disease, which he sends with a large bottle of his wonderful cure free to any sufferer who may send their express and P. O. address. We advise any one wishing a cure to address DR. AB. MESEROLE, No. 96 John St., New York.

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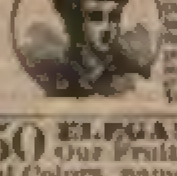

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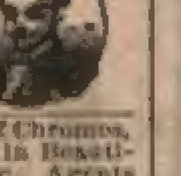

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7 more BIG OFFERS!

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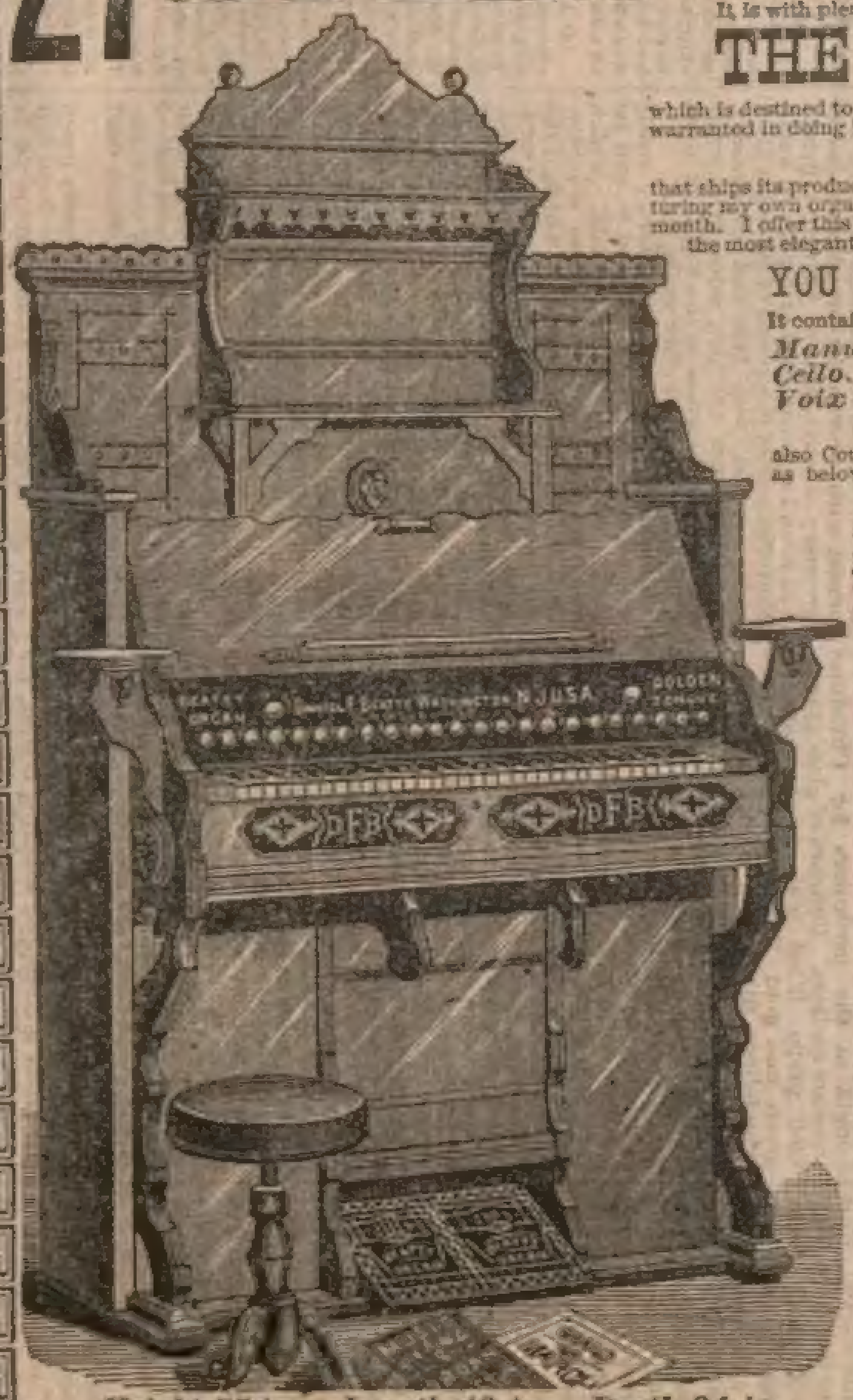

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which is destined to be the most *Popular Organ* the world has ever seen. My success in the past having been so unprecedented, I feel warranted in doing better than ever for my customers, hence this unparalleled offer. I have now the

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that ships its products direct to the purchaser, avoiding extortionate profits, middlemen and agents, manufacturing my own organs in *my own Factory*, and being sure of selling thousands of this charming style every month. I offer this organ, containing a *grander variety* of stop work, *greater power*, more musical effects, the most elegant exterior, including a first-class stool, book and music, boxed and delivered on board cars, for only

$60.00

YOU CAN TEST IT IN YOUR OWN HOME, FREE OF EXPENSE, FOR ONE YEAR.

It contains *27 Stops, 5 Octaves*, 10 full sets of Golden Tongue Reeds, as follows:

Manual Sub-Bass	*16 feet tone,*	*Diapason*	*8 feet tone,*	*Dulciana*	*8 feet tone,*
Cello	*8 feet tone,*	*French Horn*	*8 feet tone,*	*Saxaphone*	*8 feet tone,*
Voix Celeste	*8 feet tone,*	*Viola Dolce*	*4 feet tone,*	*Violina*	*4 feet tone,*
		Piccolo	*4 feet tone,*		

also Coupler Harmonique, Harp Æoline, Grand Expressione, Vox Humana, Vox Jubilante and other grand accessory effects as below:—

SPECIFICATION OF STOP WORK, 27 IN ALL.

1—Cello.
2—Melodia.
3—Clarabella.
4—Manual Sub-Bass.
5—Bourdon.
6—Saxaphone.
7—Viol di Gamba.
8—Diapason.
9—Viola Dolce.
10—Grand Expressione.
11—French Horn.
12—Harp Æoline.
13—Vox Humana.
14—Echo.
15—Dulciana.
16—Clarionet.
17—Voix Celeste.
18—Violina.
19—Vox Jubilante.
20—Piccolo.
21—Coupler Harmonique.
22—Orchestral Forte.
23—Grand Organ Knee Stop.
24—Right Knee Stop.
25—Automatic Valve Stop.
26—Right Duplex Damper.
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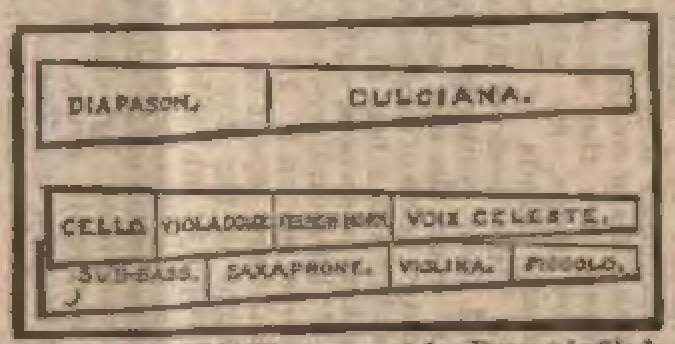

PLAN OF REEDBOARD. A caveat for Patent is filed at the Patent Office, to protect this valuable invention. No other manufacturer can build an organ with this Reedboard at any price.

BEATTY'S NEW PATENT ADJUSTABLE STOP ACTION. In this action is reached the highest state of perfection attainable. The case of the *MOZART ORGAN* is a design of *rare beauty*, and is simply unrivalled at the price offered. Beautiful Lamp Stands. It is of *solid walnut* with extra large fancy top decorated with original designs in fret work. Receptacle for music, book rack, music holder of chaste design, sliding fall with lock.

This beautiful Organ was never equalled in the history of the Organ trade for Excellence in every feature.

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Write your Name plain. Letters short as possible. We have no time to read very long letters. Be sure to give Post Office, County, State, Freight Station, on what Railroad, &c.

REMEMBER.—Satisfaction Guaranteed or Money refunded after a Year's constant use. Beware! I unhesitatingly advise those who are about to order from other manufacturers or their agents, not to do it. Order only the latest and best of all Organs. If you have already ordered, countermand your order, it may not be too late yet. An Organ lasts a lifetime, get only the latest style and best music combined. *Remit by Post Office Money Order, Express Pre-paid, Bank Draft or Registered Letter. Money refunded and freight charges paid if not as represented after a year's constant use. It is a well-known fact that I am the man* that had the nerve to reduce the price of Pianos and Organs, in the face of untold abuse from the monopolists. The public should remember this and patronize me. *REMEMBER*, any offer made by other manufacturers, no matter how low, I can do better. *WEIGH THESE WORDS CAREFULLY.* I dare not ship you a poor instrument as it is not possible for me to know who will test it. Agents invariably conceal defects and claim advantages for Organs they sell. My instruments must be good enough to silence maligners and defamers. They invariably prove satisfactory. *Thousands are now in use.*

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No Deviation whatever from above Price, No deduction to any one, one price to everybody, viz: **$60 NET CASH.** *No other manufacturer can equal this offer.*

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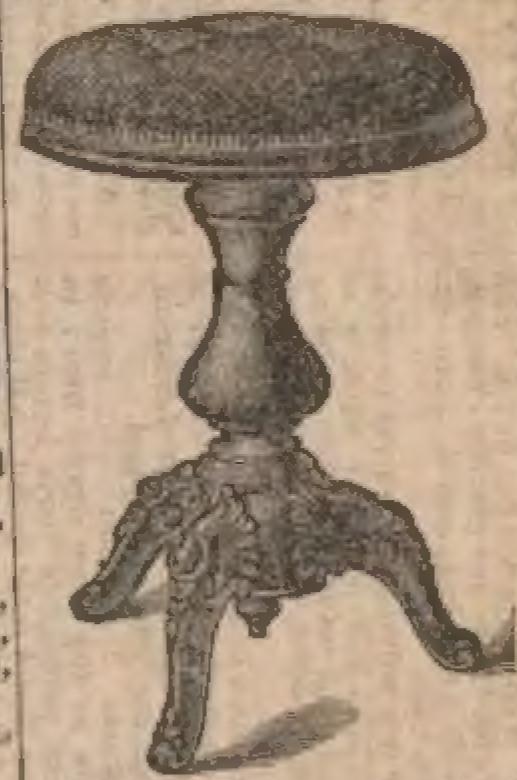

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With every "*MOZART*" Organ, Shipped (bear in mind) a very useful Instruction Book, suitable for beginners containing the elements of music, progressive exercises and studies, to which is added over sixty Polkas, Marches, Galops, including some of the very latest Songs, etc. Also a choice piece of new sheet music, all neatly packed and shipped *FREE*, with the instrument in same box so that when the organ arrives you have everything complete. No extra charge for them or boxing. The pieces of music alone, if sold in sheet form at music stores, would be worth from $10 to $15.

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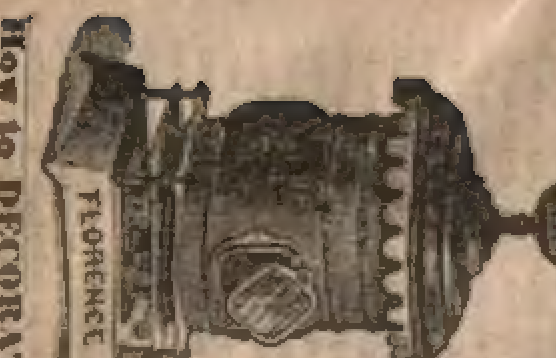
Visitors are always welcome at my warerooms, offices and manufactory, no matter whether you desire to purchase or not; come anyway, you are cordially welcome. Free coach with polite attendant meets all trains.

POSITIVELY NO DEVIATION IN PRICE.

The Price of the "*MOZART,*" ($60.00, which includes Stool, Book and Music as above,) is so very low, I regret to announce that I cannot allow $5, or anything whatever for traveling expenses.

REMEMBER!

☞ *Entire Satisfaction Guaranteed in every instance or money promptly refunded after "The Mozart" has been in constant use a year*



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50 ALL NEW STYLE Chromo Cards, (no 2 alike,) Name on 10c, Clinton Bros., Clintonville, Conn.

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DOLLS!

Eight inches tall, with beautiful life-like features. Flaxgold hair and dark eyes, or curls and blue eyes.

10 cents each, or two for 15 cents, which include a dresses with each doll. [illegible] dolls and 12 different dresses for 25 cents. Mailed free.

Special Offer to the readers of this Paper. Every person sending 15 cents will receive 2 dolls with dresses and 50 page Illus. Book free.

A lady in Tipton, Iowa, writes that she sold 45 the first afternoon. Postage stamps taken.

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At PAR with a BONUS of 40 Acres for each 10 Shares from Choice Lands of the "Disston purchase."

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Neutro-Piliene, only hair solvent known. Permanently dissolves superfluous hair, root and branch, in five minutes, without pain, discoloration or injury. "Cleopatra's Secret" quickly develops the figure to proportions of perfect nature. Harmless. Always successful. Send 2 stamps for particulars. THE WILCOX CHEMICAL PREPARATION Co., 661 Spruce St. Phila. Pa.

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70 YOUR Name in Handsome Script Type on Beautiful Chromo Cards, 10c. Latest Styles, Sentiment, Friendship, Scroll & Motto Series, 12 packs $1.00. Prompt returns. Royal Card Co., P. O. Box 21, Northford, Ct. 70

BEATTY'S ORGANS 27 stops, ten set reeds, only $90. PIANOS, $125 up. RARE HOLIDAY INDUCEMENTS ready. Write or call on Beatty, Washington N J

ITS POPULARITY IS UNPARALLELLED!!

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LIFE OF GARFIELD PRICE ONLY $2

This work is Profusely Illustrated, tells the entire thrilling story of his eventful life and tragic death; has been critically revised and approved by one of his most intimate personal friends; has far outsold all other editions because the best and cheapest, and our terms to Agents are the most liberal of any. Superb Steel Plate Portraits **Free**!! Outfit **50c.** For proof of excellence, salability, success of agents and terms address at once. HUBBARD BROS., Pubs., Phila.

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300 **Choice** Poetical Selections for Autograph Albums, neatly bound; **250** spicy Motto Verses, and **60** Popular Songs, all for 12 cents, postpaid. PATTEN & WADE, 6 Barclay Street, N. Y.

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80 SAMPLE CARDS, All New, name on 10c. Agts. outfit 10c. CARD WORKS, Birmingham, Conn.

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50 CARDS, Feather & Hand Series &c, in fancy case 10c. Samples 3c. Empire Card Co, Birmingham, Ct

Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

INVALUABLE to the stout person is the Princess polonaise which opens in front from the waist down, showing the underskirt and then slightly, puffed on the hips; the Camargo paniers also have had a great success, and are still worn.

A costume of shaded and plain mahogany colored satin, made in this style, is very striking; the skirt, quite flat, of shaded satin, is cut round and narrow; at the edge a large butterfly ruche, cut on the bias, is sewn.

The corselet of plain satin, is made with points in front, and with straight, slashed basques behind. The upper part of the corsage, held in by the corselet, is pleated and gauged; under the lower edge of the corselet the Camargo paniers are fixed, and these are the most puffed of any style; they are made of plain satin, jointed behind under a large bow of wide ribbon. This toilette should be particularly noted, for it will be very fashion-able this season.

As to the gigot sleeve, which it is said, is now accepted, it is sincerely to be hoped that good taste will prevent any abuse of it, and that no one will ever re-introduce the horrible balloon sleeves of our ancestors, although a reasonable puffing at the shoulder is often very becoming, giving the necessary width to ladies of long, slender shape.

In woollens and cloth English fabrics are preferred, and are often made up with extreme simplicity, though beautifully and artistically cut; these austere but well-made costumes of gray tweed being especially used by those who stand highest in the social scale; for walking purposes dresses are made far more stylish, and more richly trimmed than for driving, and this is to a certain extent wise, as the carriage hides, perhaps, the handsomest part of the dress.

For winter wear handsome striped velvets mixed with broches will be much worn, in very rich, warm colors, in opposition, to the pale, delicate tints for evening wear which are so essentially elegant and quiet; striped materials will make very pretty costumes to be worn at country houses, trimmed with lace, or, with black, white, or reddish tulles sprinkled with gold or else silk in the principal shades of the dress.

Very pretty fichus are made of gauze, either ecru or black, embroidered with gold or with silk the color of the dress they are to be worn with; one very pretty fichu to be worn with a moire dress is of black tulle, sprinkled with gold, and edged with wide gold lace; it is fastened to the chest with a red and a tea-rose. This fichu is very suitable for dinner dresses, and is accompanied by Artagnan cuffs of the same materials, or of grenadine edged with gold lace; it is a very suitable method of enlivening a corsage which has been worn several times.

In spite of the preference shown for moire, plush is still much used as a trimming for dresses, cloaks, bonnets, fichus, the magnificent deep soft colors that good plushes always display will recommend them as valuable winter materials.

Silk cord, tags, and handsome girdles are more worn than ever, but the favorite trimming for the long winter redingotes is rich passementerie applique; the elegant redingotes worn by the beaux at the time of the Restoration are again appearing, with a few necessary, but slight alterations for ladies' winter wear.

The mantles, for example, are at present composed of very rich materials, such as silk plush, broche velvet, moire antique, watered velvet, as well as the rich satins which resembles a fine kid glove in texture.

India and Hindoo cashmere are also largely employed as material for nicely trimmed mantles, where Escalier plush and Ourson plush are employed as the very deep border, cape, and sleeve trimmings. Wide bands and deep borders of Ourson plush have an almost indescribable effect; the fabric is not like feathers, yet possesses all the lightness and elegance of feather trimming; it does not closely resemble fur, yet partakes of the rich quality and hand-effect of good seal.

Visites are made with double cape, covering the arms, a very pretty and stylish effect. This shape is introduced in damask satin, in plush, and in velours de laine, both plain and broche; the prices in this warm and pretty velours are extremely moderate. Sillon plush, as well as Escalier plush, is used as a mantle trimming, and not unfrequently the wave plush is placed as a trimming on the plain plush.

Moire ribbons are employed for the sashes and neck bows of the mantles and moire silks are used as trimming for young girls' tight-fitting paletots.

We must return to this subject at another time, for the description of the Louvre mantles is by no means exhausted.

Chenille scarves are worn as winter wraps, and are wadded and lined throughout with shaded silk. They are very becoming to pretty figures.

Red cloth, embroidered with gold, is employed for rich dressing-gowns and house-jackets, to be worn over different skirts; plain red cloth, trimmed with black velvet, may be substituted if gold embroidery be expensive.

Fireside Chat.

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS.

IN nearly every family Christmas trees are in course of preparation at this season of the year, and many people may be glad to have a few hints on the subject. As a matter of course it is a fir tree that is chosen and it is a very great improvement if it be dotted about with tufts of wadding, to give it the aspect of being snow laden.

The next thing to be aimed at is to make it as brilliantly bright as possible, and put as many candles about it as you can, and as many knicknacks that will sparkle and reflect the light. The branches are generally supported by iron wires, having sockets for the candles, and others are inserted in small squares of tin, with a sharp point in the centre, on which a candle has been stuck. Tin reflectors behind each candle are great improvements, and it is as well to hang as many colored glass balls about as you can, as well as strings of beads, pop corn and holly berries.

With regard to the gifts attached to a Christmas tree of course everything depends on where it is shown, and for whom the presents are intended. There ought to be packets of bon-bons for all, and the forms these may assume are legion. Net purses filled with sugar plums are very suitable; they are of the old-fashioned long shape, made of white net, with tufts of colored ribbon at either end, where are the sweets, kept in their places by rings, for which purpose any of the many kinds of sugar rings are available. Tiny baskets filled with sugar plums, and their contents kept in by white net sewn over the top, small muffs made by covering a tube of cardboard with plush, and attaching a silk bag to the ends, red gelatine packets of sweets, and all the endless variety of bonbonnieres with which which the shops abound. In the way of toys, a few shillings spent on the penny ones to be bought at the toy shop will give you a large supply; and this year there is some hundreds of different grotesque figures to be had for four cents each which are suspended from the head by elastic, such as clowns with moveable arms, pigs dressed in yellow on barrels, and Turks in gorgeous attire. The knicknacks to be bought at the perfumers for Christmas trees are endless. Bunches of glass grapes, each grape filled with scent; charming green and gold Etruscan bottles; glass chandeliers, filled with scent; butterflies, the wings made of spun glass of various colors, and the body a bottle of scent; tiny baskets, containing what appears to be a bird's egg, but is in truth a scent-bottle; portmanteaus containing bottles of scent; hampers, with what appears to be a boiled turkey in grass, made of soap, with a scent-bottle inside. All these are pretty and ingenious, and are very effective.

For boys, bags filled with marbles always please, as well as knives, tools, and the like. Walnut colored ribbon, and made to contain either sweets or a thimble; bundles of straws tied together with ribbon and filled with colored silks; pincushions, especially the small ones to hang to a chatelaine made with two buttons having wadding between, and a band of colored ribbon uniting the two, a few threads of coarse purse silk of the same color as the ribbon being brought from the outside of each button into the centre; needlebooks and bookmarkers; cases for knitting needles; almanacs, especially those pretty ones in the form of cardboard fans, highly illuminated. If the tree includes presents for poor children clothing and books are acceptable, while for friends and relations in one's own family circle, almost any kind of present would be available, such as ornaments for chatelaines, the pretty gold-topped smelling bottles, for example, with chains attached, point lace, or anything in the way of needlework.

Bon-bon crackers will of course find their way to the tree, and there are many new varieties this Christmas; some containing masks, others with trifling gifts attached such as pens, lockets, glove fasteners, and the like; others in the form of a pair of gloves; and newer than all, small shells in silver and green—such as cockle, scollops, and the like. Sugar transforms itself into pianos, carrots, turnips, oats, wheat, currants harps, &c.—all of which sparkle and add to the brightness of the trees.

It is a good plan to place the tree on the centre of a large table, surrounded by an inclined plane of wood on which pieces of fir and moss are liberally sprinkled and glued, and, when quite dry, this forms a capital shelf for such larger presents as could not conveniently be attached to the tree.

Other pretty trifles for trees are balls of string secured in small Japanese baskets; the edge of the basket is bordered with a little fancy gimp, a bow of ribbon on either side. Travelling cases for umbrellas and parasols.

They are made of four pieces of brown holland having colored strips. The pieces are half a yard long and four inches broad, sewn together and bound with braid, and drawn together at the top and bottom in the same way. Wooden plates cut in half and perforated with holes are prettily painted, and filled with a silk bag, and so form excellent work-bags.

A narrow box suitable for gloves or neckties was covered with alternate squares of red satin and gold color, the latter being painted in body color, with Kate Greenaway's figures.

For bedrooms a brush rack is useful, this is a square ebony frame with a front piece of satin, painted and lined with buckram, behind which the brush is slipped.

As Christmas decoration will engage many hands as the time draws near; to have the less perishable parts before prepared will be found most useful. All texts, mottoes, and welcomes, either for church or home decorations, belong to this class, unless composed of perishable leaves, flowers, &c. If natural materials are preferred, cardboard letters thickly stitched over with ivy and other variegated leaves look best, and last a long time. All kinds of mosses, especially the grey-green kind, growing on oak, fruit trees, and shrubs, adapt well. The last should be glued on in tufts on the letters and if made for some time will if exposed to moisture regain their fresh appearance. They look best on a dark or red colored ground. For pulpit, reading desk, and lectern, panels in white or tinted straw or gray bordered with this moss, and devices in scarlet, natural or artificial berries in the centre, have a most artistic effect. Large fronds of common ferns, green or faded, crossed and lightly fastened on the panels, look very light. Letters thickly coated with flax seed, which can be done by painting them over with thin glue and laying each letter right side uppermost in a bed of the seed, show best on a pure white ground, which if soft covered with sheets of wadding or swanskin, allowing the letters to sink in, has all the better effect. All the artificial devices for covering and frosting letters are too numerous to mention here, and letters entirely composed of sparkling and icicle dropping glass will be a further novelty this season.

Chandeliers and gaseliers of all shapes are best decorated with twined ropes of greenery and drooping branches; the whole covered in moss, and a crown of choice holly with scarlet berries invisibly suspended by slight wire, has a charming effect.

For room decorations this crown can be made of mistletoe, flowers, &c. A novelty in room decorations are real or artificially imitated nets with stuffed robins, or other birds perched on an invisible wire near or over it, and surrounded by frosted branches, &c.

Very good decorative effects, both for table and otherwise, can be produced with the Pampas grass plumes either pulled small, or the noble stems and plumes tied into huge stars, with a colored shield, device, or finish put in the centre where the stems cross. Pillars, chancel, window, or door arches can be quickly and satisfactorily decorated with previously prepared ropes of greenery—that is, tufts or branches firmly tied round a strong cord or rope. In small churches arches composed of strong willow rods, covered with ivy and evergreens, springing from the pew sides at intervals and fastened together at the top, look most festive, and do not injure walls, &c.

Symbolical decorations—stars, rustic crosses, &c.—where not objected to, can be easily contrived. Window-sills, which often tax the artistic worker so severely, look well bedded with mosses, which, if the sill is slanting, must be fastened to cardboard to match the sill, and suspended. This can also be sewn over with large ivy leaves, allowing the leaves to overlap each others stems. On the background alternate rustic wood crosses, stars cut in cardboard and covered with tin foil, silvered, or frosted over so as to glitter, and crowns of holly with red berries, can be laid. Thick white paper cut in the shape of the sills, and a border of green or tree moss sewn round and any device cut in scarlet cloth letters tacked on the white ground, is another successful way.

The introduction of all kinds of pine and fir tree branches not only adds to the depth of green—which, in churches where stained glass supplies enough color, is of great importance—but also adds a pleasant and wholesome perfume.

The small and sometimes unsightly porch of a country church may be thus decorated with the branches. Young stems of fir plantation thinnings converted into a festive bower of greenery; a miniature but perfect specimen of the spruce pine was put in a bed of moss into the front, and sods with snowdrops growing in them, and with a few ropes of leaves over the chancel arch, and, pendent from the unsightly little gallery, some evergreen arches, and a Christmas text in tree moss on scarlet ground over the east window; a star of the same occupying the centre of the arch.

What pleasure such pine branches would bring into a hospital ward, disposed about the gaseliers, round the walls, and pendent from the centre lights, tied on with a few bright-colored ribbons!

Little trees, tree tops, or branches, simply hung with some red apples, gilded nuts, gingerbreads, a silver paper star nodding from the topmost branch, and a few wax lights shining but for an hour, would rejoice the cripples' or children's wards of our hospitals on Christmas Eve.

The simple little Christmas tree, as you find it in every poor home in city, town, cottage, and forest hut in the land of Christmas trees, is better than the overgrown over-laden tree, tortured into so many hundred pegs to hang bundles on, and which often cannot be lighted for fear of singed flannel and melted dolls' faces.

Correspondence.

IVANHOE, (Chicago, Ill.)—In the language of flowers, ivy means fidelity.

H. H., (Harrisburg, Pa.)—Please write again and give us fuller particulars.

H. TYER, (Bordentown, N. J.)—You are right. Financially, the Centennial Exhibition was not a success.

SUBSCRIBER, (Tyro, Miss.)—Write to Lippincott & Co., Publishers, this city. They will give you the desired information.

A. O. M., (New Orleans, La.)—We do not believe the statement. Good figs can be bought upon our streets at 10 cents per pound.

B. F., (Havana, Ill.)—We do not think it right to go, as you do not know him well enough. You might visit his place with your parents or a relation but not alone. If he is so much interested it is his plain duty to call on you.

K., (Rockford, Va.)—An obliging correspondent, G. M. H., says the lines:

I fling my heart into your lap,
Without a word of pleading,

are from Whittier's poem "Among the Hills."

ISADORE, (Chelsea, Mass.)—When an engagement between a young lady and a young gentleman is broken off it is usual to return not only the engagement ring, but all other presents as well, but it is entirely optional on the part of each or both. There is no law but that of convention on the subject.

J. P., (West Chester, Pa.)—We cannot tell you where and when the custom originated of considering a boy as a man that he had reached the age of twenty-one. Blackstone simply says that one arriving at the age of twenty-one is at the years of discretion, but gives no history of the custom, which can be traced as far back as the Norman invasion of England. 2. The phrase "heart of hearts," is one of those invented by persons who had an affection of the heart," and wished to express themselves strongly.

UNHAPPY ONE, (Lodi, N. J.)—We cannot advise you to marry a woman who has wronged you so cruelly. But if you are unable at present to summon the moral courage sufficient to throw her off altogether, you should endeavor to keep away from her for at least a year. If at the end of that time your feelings have not changed, and in the meantime the woman you love has expressed deep contrition for her conduct, and you have reason to believe that she will never again treat you in such a cruel manner, you must then decide for yourself what it were better to do for your future happiness.

LINDA, (Yazoo, Miss.)—You ask, "Would you tell me a few, very, very, sincere ways to close off a letter" to a gentleman to whom you are "deeply engaged." The modern æsthete would "close off" such a letter in this way: "Your too, too, too utterly quite lover," but other and more sensible people would be content to subscribe themselves, "Your faithful and devoted lover, "Your own Julia," or whatever your Christian name may be. We would remind you that nothing disgusts a young man so much as too much gush, whether communicated orally or in writing, from a lady he is interested in.

STUDENT, (Dubuque, Ia.)—The sect of Ali was founded by a famous Mahommedan chief, the son-in-law of Mahommed, (having married his daughter Fatima,) about A. D. 632. Ali was called by the Prophet "the Lion of God, always victorious;" and the Persians follow the interpretation of the Koran according to Ali, while other Mahommedans adhere to that of Abubeker and Omar. It is worthy of remark that the first successors of Mahommed—Abubeker, Omar, Othman, and Ali, whom he had employed as his chief agents in establishing religion and extirpating unbelievers, and whom on that account he styled the "cutting swords of God," all died violent deaths; and that this bloody impostor's family was wholly extirpated within thirty years after his own decease. Ali was assassinated in 660.

GLADYS, (Charleston, S. C.)—The modern conventional idea is not that of the Greek sculptors, or of Dame Nature either, for the matter of that. To be sure, the Venus of Milo is commonly regarded in theory as the perfection of shapeliness in women; but, practically, if you were to dress her, and start her down Broadway or Walnut street she would attract attention by her ungainliness, and not by her beauty. Milo's Venus will do well enough in statuary, but had better not get down from her pedestal, for she would surely be "guyed" if she attempted to pass as a fashionable woman. She would be compelled to wear a thirty-two inch corset and number nine boots, and would absolutely have no style about her. The moderns go in for curved lines more than the Greeks did, and for greater delicacy. Nor is there any use in saying that they were right and we wrong, because that would not alter the matter. Centuries of tight lacing have moulded the civilized female figure into its present hour-glass proportions, and it is enough that the men of the period will have it so. Those who want Venuses must go to agricultural districts for them; the real Venus shape is not admired in refined society.

J. H. T., (Stanton, Mo.)—They are found in any almanac. The whole refer to finding out and fixing questions of time. The Dominical Letter is of use to ascertain when any certain day occurred in any certain year. It takes the name Dominical from the first letter in the base of the system, A, denominating Sunday. The Golden Number indicates the number of a particular year in what is called the lunar cycle. When it runs to 19 it begins at 1 again. This is because every nineteen years, as this cycle is based, the new moon begins on the First of January. It takes its name from being anciently painted in letters of gold on marble pillars. The Epact is the excess of the solar above the lunar year. In round numbers one is 354 the other 365 days long. The difference is the Epact. This in three years amounts to 33 days. When, however, it goes above 30, this number, making a month, is deducted from it, leaving three days. The fourth year, the Epact, becomes 0. The next year 11, etc. The Solar Cycle is a system running to 28. At the recurrence of each period certain time arrangements are begun again. This cycle will only hold good, being entirely artificial, for the present century. The Julian period is another artificial system invented by the famous scholar, Scaliger. It is found by multiplying the figures of the Golden Numbers and the Solar Cycles. The Roman Indiction is a period of 15 years, but has no reference to astronomical phenomena. To find it add three years to our date and divide by 15, the remainder will be the year of Indiction. If there is no remainder it is the fifteenth of the cycle. 2. The President pays for them out of his private purse. 3. The Pope is an Italian. He was a Cardinal. His family name is Pecci; his official name Leo XIII.